



# Songs with a Bradford Accent

Lyrics of songs to mark Bradford's year of Culture 2025

Compiled by Robbie Martin (2025)

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*This song tells of workers from the local brewery who, full of confidence and bravado, joined the Duke of Wellington's Regiment at the start of WWI. Their nickname 'Havercake Lads' stems from the havercake (a Pennine oatcake) on the end of the recruiting sergeant's sword to lure hungry volunteers in earlier days.*

*Sprightly, upbeat instrument intro and first two verses in 6/8 (quick waltz) time*

1. We are lads from Timmy Taylors, we are lads from Keighley town  
And we own that Taylor's brewery is the best for miles around  
But we hear that over Europe marches mighty Germany  
We must leave our work and families, we must face the enemy

*Chorus*            From the hops and yeast and barley to recruiting sergeant go  
From the mash tun and the copper, we must go to fight the foe

2. Keighley lads are strong and feisty, Keighley lads are bold as brass  
And Havercake lads in smart new uniforms'll go where fighting's to be had  
Fort the honour of our nation we must not let Belgium down  
For the sake of King and country, for the glory of our town

*Chorus*            From the hops and yeast and barley to recruiting sergeant go  
From the mash tun and the copper, we must go to fight the foe

*Slower and quieter instrumental break / next verse in minor key*

3. Havercake lads we did our duty in Duke's Yorkshire regiment,  
And on the battlefields of Flanders many a young life there was spent.  
And those left among the living swore that war would be no more,  
Back to a land not fit for heroes, weary we returned to shore.  
Back to the hops and yeast and barley,  
Back to Taylor's brewery,  
Back to the mash tun and the copper,  
But not the men we used to be, not the men we used to be.

*Slow instrumental air/lament*

Back to the hops and yeast and barley, back to Taylor's brewery,  
Back to the mash tun and the copper, but not the men we used to be  
(repeat last line)

An anonymous and over-optimistic bit of doggerel celebrating the Keighley to Halifax railway via Denholme. The words can be found on a sign by the wonderful Hewenden viaduct at Cullingworth, now a pleasant walk/cycle path. The station didn't actually open till 1884. Due to the steep hill to the village it was not popular with passengers and used mainly for freight. It closed to passengers in 1951 and altogether in 1961. I haven't found any other recordings or tunes for this song, although apparently 'Songs from the Age of Steam' from which this comes can be found at York Railway Museum. So I made up my own. There is a verse 5 which I leave out as people 'might think it's far too long'.

1. Oh after years of toil and care with money wasted here and there  
In '73 we did prepare to get the Denholme railway  
Great opposition did arise , but corporations found supplies  
And money from Council which surprised  
The men who won the railway

**Chorus/inst** Cheering steaming puffing along, trains well filled with old and young  
Joining in a chorus long, upon the Denholme Railway

2. The telegraph news when it came by old and young with joy was seen  
The band did play, the bells did ring for winning the Denholme Railway.  
The church bells rang a merry peal, which did our bygone troubles heal,  
We did not then our joys conceal  
For we had won the railway

3. When our line is made we'll see this village in prosperity  
Upon that point all did agree that worked on Denholme Railway.  
E. Foster and J. Knowles did go with other gentlemen to show  
They wanted traffic to and fro  
Upon the Denholme Railway

**Chorus/Inst**

4. Our local wants will be supplied from market towns both near and wide  
All kinds of goods will be supplied to come by Denholme Railway  
The fruit of those who daily toil now fathoms deep beneath the soil  
Will come by rail our pots to boil  
Upon the Denholme Railway
5. Now friends around excuse my song, which you might think is far too long  
But facts I had to dwell upon about our Denholme Railway.  
In chorus now please join with me, wishing health and prosperity  
To the gentlemen who did agree to lay the Denholme Railway.

**Chorus/ Inst**

## **BLACK WATER**

Down where the black water flows and over the bridge that we call home,  
Down where the rocks are growing old that's where we'll be.  
Black water passes me by, old forces bringing new life,  
Stepping stones to the other side, that's what we need.

*Another road, another step, another stone,  
Taking me back home.  
Black water flow,  
From the dale to sea, the water runs from you to me,  
The secrets that we keep.  
Black water flow.*

The gray heron is on the wing, down by the foss the voices sing,  
They are lost souls still lingering with no way home.  
The signs are in the sand, they lead me to the riverbank,  
We're all strangers in this land, we're moving on.

### *Chorus*

They say blood is thick, but the water runs deep.  
The secrets that we share is the love we keep.  
They say blood is thick, but the water runs deep.  
The music that we share, the music that we share is the bond we keep.

### *Chorus*

## ***WALKIN' IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD***

1. Got a taste of human racin'  
Everybody's interfacin'  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood  
Got a frown that needs replacin'  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood  
There's a touch of magic in the air (x2)  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood

2. Got a sense of what we're doin'  
Everybody's plans are brewin'  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood  
Kettle boiling, teabag brewin'  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood  
There's a touch of magic in the air (x2)  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood

3. On the field the football's flyin'  
Last week's kit ain't finished dryin'  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood  
All the mums deserve a lie-in  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood  
There's a touch of magic in the air (x2)  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood

4. Everybody's looking lively  
After all the season's changin'  
Little birds are congregatin'  
You can hear the song they're singin'  
All the kids have gone out shoppin'  
All the pubs are full to burstin'  
All the freaks are peace protestin'  
There's a touch of magic in the air (x2)  
Ooh, walkin' in my neighbourhood

Ben Z Walker: vocals, guitar; Larry Potter: udu, sansula, bongos.  
Music © Peter Fame 2003. Lyrics by Benjamin Ward © 2003.  
From the album *If You Want Love 20* (2024) by Ben Z Walker

**Wright, Joseph** (1855–1930) philologist and dialectologist born in 1855 at Thackley, near Bradford. His parents were Dufton Wright, a woollen cloth weaver and quarryman, and Sarah Ann Atkinson. His early working life included a spell at Titus Salt's mill in Saltaire. Studying languages at night school and in Heidelberg led him to an Oxford professorship in philology. He is remembered for his dialect dictionary of the UK and as a founder member of the Yorkshire Dialect Society.

1. T'was a lesson of sorts from the weaving -  
Made from words, made from words.  
When mill lasses' chat was his gold dust -  
Joseph heard, Joseph heard.  
He quit Saltaire with no word of farewell,  
Left the start of a diction'ry behind.  
'I could have served t'Mill better  
Didn't mean to desert,  
Tha knows t'was the last thing on my mind.'
2. He knew the magic of the boffin doffer -  
How things work, how things work.  
He found strange tools 'round the Dales -  
Heard old tongues, heard old tongues  
For tuppence a week students joined his new school  
For some, classes matched the Tower of Babel.  
Some studied dialects  
Day and night like young Wright  
And language was the first thing on their minds.
3. He walked and talked across Europe -  
to Heidelberg, to Heidelberg.  
He learnt old German from scholars -  
Studied for a PhD.  
When he came home again, recognition followed soon  
Oxford called him to teach a course for women.  
Emancipation brought new language,  
Joseph's students stood up tall  
With freedom at the forefront of their minds.
4. Joseph gathered his words in a diction'ry -  
The English tongue, the English tongue.  
Tykes saw their sayings in its pages -  
Words they knew, words they knew.  
A society was formed to celebrate their speech  
Other counties were not far behind.  
From town hall to corner shop  
People learned from old Wright  
To keep the local language in their minds.  
To keep language local in their minds.

## ***SIX DAYS A WEEK THE WHEELS WILL TURN***

Monday in the weaving shed, we blend the warp and weft  
A fabric woven on the sweat of those who's lives are kept  
To work and toil to make ends meet, to feed the bairns at home  
It'll not be long before they're chasing shuttles for the loom

### *CHORUS*

Six days a week the mill wheels will turn  
The clacking of the shuttles  
As they twirl and spin the yarn  
Six days a week the mill wheels turn  
Six days a week the mill wheels turn

Tuesday comes just like the rest, the grind of life goes on  
But bonds of friendship forged will last forever in this town  
We stick together share our strength united we are one  
And we will fight for justice and to keep the bairns at home

### *CHORUS*

Wednesday now, the bailer's out unloading what has come  
From market day in Bradford bails of wool will now be hung  
Ready for the carders to untangle, and to roll  
So soft to touch the rovings are now ready to be spun

### *CHORUS*

#### *Bridge*

By Thursday more than 40 hours toiling has been done  
By women, men and boys and girls each and every one  
Friday comes another 12 hours added to our week  
Everyone exhausted, now, can hardly speak

Saturday we work till noon then doors will open wide  
A rainy day, like poetry will wash our work aside  
A few short hours to rest and play, before we start again  
The clatter of the clogs will say a new week has begun

*CHORUS plus* Clickety clack, clickety clack etc

9 November 2024 - C Harney

## ***MY TOWN***

It could have been a big town or a city  
Those steam powered engines drew me in  
I got to ride on the footplate of the loco  
Stoke the engine with black diamonds Mr Briggs

*Chorus*            Oakworth calls my name whenever I am far away  
To hear once more the chugging of the trai...n

Filled to the brim our train gets to deliver  
Mrs Jones's Pies and wool straight from the mill  
On to the town where Slim Jim is the Porter  
Stoke the engine with black diamonds Mr Briggs

*Chorus*

*Bridge*

We drive across moorland, the route we take so neatly planned  
On gleaming rails we ride, we ride

*Chorus*

We're loaded now, and ready for the home run  
Back to the place where we belong  
Carrying wood for Mr Martin's cabin  
Stoke the engine with black diamonds Mr Briggs

## ***CLICKETY CLACK***

The houses still standing on this old cobbled street  
Home loom weavers long gone, won't come back, clickety clack  
Upstairs windows light where they worked  
Backward and forward clickety clack, clickety clack, clickety clack

### *CHORUS:*

Still standing, still standing, but nothing standing still  
Still standing, still standing, but nothing standing still  
The mill still standing on the skyline of the town  
No clatter of the jenny or smoke from the stack, clickety clack  
No bobbins, no shuttles left to fly  
Backward and forward clickety clack, clickety clack, clickety clack

### *CHORUS*

### *Bridge*

Northern mill towns made from stone and cement  
They forged a revolution and they don't forget  
They have mellowed with age, weathered through time  
And live to tell a story of days gone by  
Galleries and cafes on the carding floor now  
Tourists stroll on the cobbles, as the past calls back, clickety clack  
Ghosts walk these hills and wild moorland

Backward and forward clickety clack, clickety clack, clickety clack  
clickety clack, clickety clack, clickety clack

It was 1936, one Friday night in May  
Jack and Alf were walking, talking about their day  
The Hindenburg above them had darkened Keighley skies  
This is the day they will remember all their lives

They carried on down Temple Row, kicking stones for play  
One lad spied a letter there, tossed along the way  
Please open up this letter was written on one side  
This is the day they will remember all their lives

**Chorus**

A token of flowers, a small silver cross,  
a letter remembering a brother long lost  
Some stamps, some pictures by way of great thanks  
Please leave on the grave of my young brother Franz

Above the world that Friday, it was just another day  
But from New York via Keighley a Zeppelin came their way  
A letter dropped by the flying priest to honour war lost life  
This is the day they will remember all their lives

**Chorus**

*Plus* - This is the day they will remember all their lives

## **FLY**

### **Mockingbirds**

*The ballad of Lily Cove, aeronaut and parachutist*

Cath Harney & Pam Johnson

Born Elizabeth Mary in 1885  
Left the London factory to find a new life  
Now you lie beneath me, in the cold hard ground  
I mark your passing within sight of the place where you were found

#### *Refrain:*

Lily Cove Mmmmmm  
You fly with angels

21 years old, you took to the sky  
To parachute down to earth before their star struck eyes  
You'd been singing with the band and laughing with the crowd  
Now they see you wrapped in a plain muslin shroud

#### *Refrain*

#### *Bridge*

Nobody knows, why you fell that day  
If you could answer me, I wonder what you'd say  
Now etched on my face is a picture from your life  
An air balloon with a parachute tied

#### *Refrain*

Perched on a trapeze seat beneath a red balloon  
Were you lighter than air that summer afternoon?  
With your steadfast gaze, your skirts thrown aside  
A liberated woman or were you taken for a ride?

#### *Refrain:*

Lily Cove Mmmmmm  
You fly with angels  
Lily Cove Mmmmmm  
You fly with angels  
Fly with angels  
Fly

Minnie Hey was known to all across the town,  
her caring hands were needed whenever death came round  
Satin for the oak, muslin for the pine  
Laying out the townsfolk for viewing one last time

**Chorus**

Lay them out Minnie, lay them out fine  
Satin oak and tassels, muslin for pitch pine  
Lay them out Minnie lay them out fine

Minnie Hey laid out the dead, when their days were done  
She made the shrouds in line with wealth and means  
Satin for the oak, muslin for the pine  
In death wealth defines them, no leveller this time

**Chorus**

No pockets for the shrouds, No-one needs to pack  
These covers are front only, there's no coming back  
Satin for the oak, muslin for the pine  
The fabric of a life revealed, and still the same through time

**Chorus** *plus 2 extra last line*

## **LISTER'S PRIDE**

I'm Samuel Lister, a businessman, I have the most audacious plan  
To make as much money as I can, from my father's mill in Manningham.  
The chimney will be known as Lister's Pride, and all will admire it from far and wide.

*Wages spent on dress and drink will keep us poor, that's what he thinks*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back.*

With my new inventions and machinery, this will be a place of opportunity  
For workers whatever their place of birth, I'll pay them what I think they're worth  
And we'll make silk of the finest kind and I'll make money, my pockets to line.

*Wages spent on dress and drink will keep us poor, that's what he thinks*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back.*

The horses trudge up Heaton Road, carrying the coal, it's a heavy load  
Steam-powered looms with their noise and dust, the workers toiling until they bust  
Sirens at lunchtime and end of day, no holidays and a pittance of pay.

*Wages spent on dress and drink will keep us poor, that's what he thinks*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back.*

25 per cent wage cut just before Christmas, mustn't ask why, it's not our business  
We'll not take that, we're going on strike, we'll stop the machines, he can do what he likes  
We'll form an Independent Labour Party, and our leader will be Keir Hardie.

*Wages spent on dress and drink will keep us poor, that's what he thinks*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back.*

Now the looms are silent and shut is the mill, no more clickety clack upon that hill  
And the people who came from far and wide to work in the mill which was Lister's pride  
From a life of toil and poverty, from drudgery they are now free.

*Wages spent on dress and drink will keep us poor, that's what he thinks*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back.*

And the chimney still stands for all to admire, no traces left of the terrible fire  
Which racked the mill in Lister's day, or the poor conditions and pitiful pay  
Now within its walls new lives are led, by Bradford people born and bred.

*Wages spent on dress and drink will keep us poor, that's what he thinks*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back.*  
*Clickety clack, clickety clack, the shuttle goes up and the shuttle goes back*

*Am Dm Em Am Dm E x2*

(spoken intro) *It's August 24 and here in Bradford, some people are saying we must be mad  
For risking abuse by trolls and vultures "welcome, to The City of Culture!" The centre of  
town's like a building site, the bus station's closed, will it open? Well it might...  
Our great new music venue, Bradford Live, cancelled their first gigs, and we don't know why*

There's litter and there's homeless people on the streets,  
you gotta be careful where you put your feet  
There's broken windows, empty pubs and shops,  
can we dare to believe, next year the rot stops?

*SAX.....Key change A F# E, A D E7 x2*

But wait, every town has got its share  
and people complain, living anywhere  
Now it's late October and things are moving,  
traffic free streets with plants, that's groovy  
At last Bradford Live's getting sorted soon,  
and the bus station's gonna be repaired - woohoo!  
So, City of Culture next year, what's the fuss?  
Publicity and visitors - is it good for us?

*Pause..... now 12 bar bluesy format A A A A D D A A E D A E*

Well, events and exhibitions, gigs, activities for free,  
all around the Bradford area, so much to do and see  
New experience for everyone, new friends to meet and share  
the good things on our doorstep, let's enjoy while it's there  
Let's greet the world with pride but recognise the doubts and fears,  
let's make the most, and try to host a very special year

Cosmopolitan diversity, many flags unfurled no monoculture, it's a  
microcosm of the world  
And I'm ok with that, it's why I'm living here in different parts of Bradford,  
for all my 70 years!  
Folks are friendly and approachable, I never feel alone,  
Everything I need is here, that's why it's still my home

*Change to just A D, A E Choir or Singaround people sing, x 4*

Come on Bradford, we're not reaching for the stars  
Let's celebrate the best of what we are

*On last repeat, fade out to the sound of footsteps on street, me whistling  
the Come on Bradford melody, And audio of misc members of the public passing by,  
talking/laughing*

*Tune - Going to Kansas City, Wilbert Harrison.*

1. I'm goin' to Bradford City, Bradford City here I come  
They got lots of crazy things there, and I'm gonna get me some
  
2. I might go on the railway, or maybe catch a plane  
But if I have to walk there, well I'm goin' just the same
  
3. I'll cruise the malls and markets, get some bargains don't you know  
I'll wander round the charity shops, gonna get me some new clothes  
Don't need to spend much money, looking great from head to toes
  
4. I'll need some food inside me, keep the hunger at bay  
I'm in the Capital of Curries – what more can I say  
Three chapattis and massala, that'll see me through the days
  
5. The Media Museum, full of interest and fun  
The cinemas and theatres, there's something here for everyone  
Then a band at Bradford Live, yeah, before the day is done  
Eyup  
Hello, is that Bradford?  
That's righ' lad, ye're through to Bra'fud  
  
Oh, hi... I was going to come for the day, but somebody told me  
there's loads of stuff around the outskirts of Bradford to see, and I  
need to come for a few days... what do you think?  
Thaa's reet lad, there's a brass band in t'Queensbury Mill,  
an award winnin' park, an art gallery, an Industrial Museum,  
  
Historic Saltaire village, 2 football clubs, 2 viaducts, Ilkley  
Moor, it's beautiful, the birth place of the Labour Party, and  
the Brontes, and the Bradford Boar...
  
6. To end my day in Bradford, I wanna celebrate  
Have a drink in every bar from, Jacobs Well to North Parade  
When I wake up I'll remember - my day in Bradford was just great!  
  
I'm going to Bradford City, Bradford City here I come

## ENGLAND

Inspired by racism in Keighley

**Choir:** *Joel Griffiths, Sue Hall, Jennie Kiff, Tony Levy, Mark Lunn, Louise Miller, Rosemary Miller, Frances Powell, and Carolyn Williams*

England  
A prehistoric man felled a tree and found it would float  
And he set off to sea in his primitive boat  
And discovered that Eden wasn't quite so remote  
In fact... it was just across the Channel in England  
So he paddled back again, he got his wife and his kids  
And his cousins and said "hey now, come and see this"  
"I've found a new place to live, it's absolute bliss"  
"And it's just across the Channel in England"  
And he said "it's a privilege to be here  
It's always the place I'll call home  
And if I ever feel unlucky to be here  
Just remind me what it is to me  
The geography, the history  
The reason I'm standing so tall  
Is the reason I've come to this place after all"

A few thousand years later some tourists from Rome  
Called it civilisation as they piled up the bones  
But they had problems with Vandals  
And they had to go home  
But some stayed back to help to build England  
Then the Angles and Saxons and Vikings and Jutes  
All took it in turns to bag hold of the loot  
Till the Normans got sick of their daily commute  
And thought they might as well live here in England

*Chorus:*  
Cos it's always a privilege to be here  
It's always the place I'll call home  
And if I ever feel unlucky to be here  
Just remind me what it is to me  
The geography, the history  
The reason I'm standing so tall  
Is the reason they come to this place after all

Well, all of our neighbours then wanted a fight  
Till the French got fed up and the Spanish took flight  
Hey, but even the Germans have turned out alright  
Everyone's welcome in England  
And your typical local, genetics will tell  
There's a rainbow of nations there under the shell  
And there's probably a smidgeon of Martian as well  
Well, their first stop was bound to be England

*Chorus*

So when you hear today's Englishmen and women complain  
"They come over here and they never fit in"  
Well, all down the centuries it was ever the same  
That's how we've all come to be here in England

*Chorus*

*Words and music by Den Miller*  
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## **BARNEY'S ARMY**

It's smack in the middle of Bradford, they call it Forster Square  
Everyone knows there's a station there but they're wholly unaware  
This once was the site of the Broad Ford where Bradford's waters met  
Now a million feet can cross the street and nobody gets 'em wet

Cos Bradford Beck is buried, but by no means dead and gone  
It's lost the right to see the light but still it flows along  
It gives us heart to play a part and sing a loud refrain  
It goes "Bring Bradford Beck Back", let it see the light again

*Chorus:* We are Barney's Army, the Friends of Bradford's Becks  
On course to make our waterways deserving of respect  
Bradfordians in chorus, in support of our campaign  
We never rest till we get the very best of the rain.....

Our waterways are public space for young and old to share  
For one and all clean water's as important as fresh air  
Our aim is clear and simple, bring our river back to life  
Make Bradford Beck the symbol of what we know is right

Yes we are Barney's Army singing give us back us Becks  
To make our lovely city always looking at its best  
A source of pride and pleasure for all who live nearby  
So let's "Bring Bradford Beck Back", wide open to the sky

*Chorus:* (ends - of all our Bradford rain)

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## ***BRADFORD CANAL***

Attention all passengers aboard this boat  
Here's a health warning before we start  
Draw a deep breath if you intend to sing  
'Cos this song STINKS

Now the life of a bargeman's not cosy or easy  
But he doesn't get scurvy and he shouldn't get seasick  
With a boat for a home and a family for crew  
There's goods to be carried and plenty to do  
But there's one trip too far for a bargeman's morale  
That's taking a cargo on the Bradford Canal

### Chorus:

Oh the stink, oh the smell  
You'll be forgiven for thinking it's hell  
Oh the stink, oh the smell  
Steer well away from the Bradford Canal

It's a navy-built section from t' Liverpool-Leeds  
Making Bradford's connection to West and to East  
From Shipley Junction it's just three-and-half miles  
But with ten locks to tackle takes more than a while  
And once you've unloaded at t' Hoppy Bridge end  
It's ten locks all over to get out again

### Chorus

As transport for boats what's the water was meant  
But this stretch of water's a deadly dead-end  
Not used just for transport but everything else  
Especially the nasty stuff poured out from t'mills  
Which spring up like mushrooms along both its banks  
Manufacturing water that's reeking and rank

### Chorus

To t'solvent and dyestuff from t'making of cloth  
Add human detritus tipped neat into t'broth  
Which wafts all round Windhill when t' wind blows from t'West  
And spreads typhus and cholera to those who ingest  
The contents explosive, it might well ignite  
By t' Bradford Canal please there's no naked lights

Chorus:

Oh the stink, oh the smell  
Steer well away from the Bradford Canal  
Oh the stench, oh the reek  
The odour will stick with you many a week  
Oh the niff, oh the pong  
You've just been singing the smelliest song  
Oh the stink oh the smell  
Steer well away from the Bradford Canal

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## **SHIPLEY GLEN TRAMWAY**

*(on CD Bradford Canal and Other Tales, and 'live' on YouTube)*

If you called old Sam Wilson an entrepreneur  
He'd tell you "No swearing, or you'll get a thick ear  
I'm a showman" he'd say, "and a showman intends  
To give hard-working locals some fun at weekends"  
Well it's many a year since our Sam passed away  
But his Shipley Glen Tramway's still running today

We once had a town full of trams and blue trolleys  
But cheap diesel-oil saw them well-nigh abolished  
Yet Sam's tram stays on track burning clean energy  
Plus spirit and gumption and old-fashioned elbow-grease

Chorus Pick out a couple of coins from your pocket  
A pleasure to treasure is yours for a song  
The best form of transport since Stephenson's Rocket  
The Shipley Glen Tramway goes rattlin' on

Sam Wilson's creation's defied all the odds  
So just jump aboard and ride up through the woods  
Fly up for two furlongs on narrow-gauge track  
And wave at halfway to the folk coming back  
The cable sings sweetly and hoists you uphill  
Sing along and enjoy your funicular thrill

Chorus

So hold tight everybody, we're off on the ride  
Keeping our knees and our elbows inside  
Climbing through bluebells in spring is sublime  
Or taking the kids to see Santa at Christmas time

Chorus

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## **SILVER BAND WALTZ**

*on CD "Bradford Beck" and on YouTube Channel*

Commemorating my great grandfather Barney Gilroy, Irish immigrant to Bradford who founded St Mary's Silver Band and handed on to my grandfather Tom Gilroy. The band never resumed after World WarTwo

Remember the nights of raucous rehearsal  
Blowing the cobwebs of dull days at work  
Remember the raffles, the scrounge for donations  
Till shining new instruments struck up in turn  
The thrill of the new tenor-horns in your hands  
And even without them you'd look like a band  
Slim youth was soprano, the paunch was the tuba  
With your marches, your hymns, your selections from Sousa  
But when you sat down in concert there was no doubt at all  
Your favourite tune was the Silver Band Waltz

**Chorus:** So pick up that cornet and clean off the tarnish  
Polish your smile back into the bell  
And play away, play away, make it a holiday  
Blow out your heart, and mine as well

Remember the times of sunshine and sparkle  
On warm village green or the stand in the park  
The charabanc rides, garden parties and galas  
The Lord Mayor's Show and the Whitsuntide Walk  
Remember the cobblestone carols each year  
With fingerless gloves, cotton-wool in your ears  
To the chime of the flugelhorn, trombones would crackle  
The chimneys would tremble, the alleys would echo  
But your feet couldn't wait to get back in the warm  
To sit down and play us the Silver Band Waltz

### **Chorus**

Remember the days of fierce competitions  
When music rang out in the hug of the hills  
The banners, the buttons, the brass and the tassels  
From collieries and chapels and mucky old mills  
In the face of defeat, disappointment was cured  
By downing a pint with a wide embouchure  
Then you'd twist out your mouthpieces, pack up your gear  
Crossing your fingers for better next year  
And for sweet consolation, there's all our applause  
When you come home to play us the Silver Band Waltz

## **SALTAIRE'LL DO**

Title song of CD "Saltaire'll Do", and <https://www.eddie-lawler.co.uk/songs1>

If you're looking for a place to reside  
Listen up 'cos I'm telling you  
I'm not claiming it's paradise  
I'm just saying – Saltaire'll do  
If you're browsing after houses to live  
I'm not trying to sell to you  
I'm not being over-positive  
I'm just singing – Saltaire'll do  
Founder Titus, man of foresight  
Streets named after family  
I'm so lucky he got it right  
I've got one - named after me  
Waking up to morning flavours  
What's that smelling so tasty?  
Follow my nose round to the neighbour's  
At Edward Street Bakery  
So if you're looking for a place to reside  
Listen up and I'm telling you  
I'm not praising it up to the skies  
I'm just offering a little advice  
If you think of visiting don't think twice  
(Think on) – Saltaire'll do

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## **STAR OF SALTAIRE**

*for Hattie Townsend, 13 February 2023*

### Intro:

I'd a song coming on in your honour  
But the title took a while to hang it all on  
Cos I'm a slow coach, as they say around 'ere  
But Tada! I think I've got there  
It's.....Star..... of Saltaire

You were not from round 'ere/ But you made us your home  
Enjoyed what was best/ and made it your own  
And you rolled up your sleeves/ saying "Thanks for all that"  
Now I'm settling here/ What can I give back?  
And you shone – now you're shining up there  
Star of Saltaire

Now you've left our hard cobbles and flagstones behind  
For the walkabout theatre up there in the sky  
Where you twinkle along with the Swan and Great Bear  
And the Man in the Moon has your chuckle to share

Yes you offered your talent/ with grace and with charm  
And of course – just when needed/ a touch of strong arm  
But you've floated offstage/ with no drama, no fuss  
Leaving us here for you/ and you somewhere for us  
We're not sure, but we're here to declare who you are  
Star of Saltaire

Gazing upwards at night-time we're having to peer  
Cos our vision is blurred – well let's call it a tear  
But hang on – we're in Yorkshire, it must be the rain  
As you know it's much moister round 'ere than in Spain

Adios! As they say over there  
And round 'ere it's a simple Ta-ra  
Wherever you are  
Star of Saltaire

EL Jan/Feb 2023

## ***RING THE DEVIL AWAY***

on CD 'Bradford Beck' and <https://www.eddie-lawler.co.uk/songs1>

*This song helped to inspire Maggie Silver to replace the bells at Saltaire United Reformed Church*

Go! You ringers for now is the time  
To fill night air with ring-a-ding chime  
Clear the clutter that muddles our mind  
In the thundering din of our town  
So up the stone spiral make your way  
Light up the loft and begin to play  
Make your music and make our day  
With your bing-bong ding-a-dong sounds

Chorus So flex your fingers and get them working  
Standing there in your magic circle  
Ring through the dark and make it sparkle  
Ring the devil away away (x2)  
Ring the devil away

Ring the bobs your grandsires played  
Ring that round and ring that change  
Ring the bells to cast the spells  
That change all skinflints into saints

With your rope-dance you will dispel  
Gloom and folly and fear of hell  
Your carillon-candles guide us well  
Through winter's winds and rains  
Bells called Tom and Peter and George  
Born as they were in the fiery forge  
Dodge the devil and his discords  
When in tune with the human frame

Chorus So lift up your arms and get them working  
Standing there in your magic circle  
Ring through the dark and make it sparkle  
Ring the devil away away (x2)  
Ring the devil away

Ring through the windscreens of the cars  
Over the babble of the shops and the bars  
Fill up the sky till this ringing island  
Rings with the crystal shining stars

Ring that repertoire far and wide  
Fling hallelujahs amplified  
By hill and dale and valley-side  
Like a musical waterfall  
By Aire and Wharfe and Calder and Colne  
Worth and Ryburn, Hebble and Holme  
Double and triple those echoing tones  
Sing out "Rejoice" that's all

Chorus So stretch those shoulders and get them working  
Standing there in your magic circle  
Ring through the dark and make it sparkle  
Ring the devil away away (x2)  
Ring the devil away

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## ***BALLAD OF LITTLE BECK***

*about Titus Salt Jnr and Milner Field; on YouTube and CD 'Bradford Canal'*

I know exactly where I'm from  
And I know where I will go  
I'm born of raindrops poured from cloud  
And I run to the river below                      I know  
I run run run run to the river below  
I'm a modest English stream  
I'm scarcely two miles long  
And yet the sights that I have seen  
Are more than enough for a very sad song  
For the best-laid plans of wealthy men  
To climb to the top of the tree  
Have crumbled to nothing before my eyes  
In less than a century                      Come and see  
In less than a century

So I sing my song as I tumble on my way  
And mainly to myself  
But I don't mind anyone listening  
If you're seeking a tale to tell                      But listen well  
If you want a good tale to tell  
My home is all green, briar, bramble  
Bracken, nettle, but first in spring  
There's a yellow celandine carpet  
Then bluebells as if the sky had fallen in  
Wild boar have drunk from my water  
Shy deer skipped over my banks  
Red squirrels have seen their reflection  
From an overhanging branch                      as they ran  
On a bending bouncing branch

But suddenly I am enlisted  
Diverted, channelled, dammed  
Right next to a mill-owner's mansion  
I'm part of his grandiose plan                      yes I am  
I'm part of a magnificent plan  
For he's built his country residence  
Away from the smoke and the din  
And I fill a lake for little rowing-boats  
With fine trout and white water-lilies in  
By the croquet-lawn the huge hothouse  
Holds melons, orchids and palms

And flowers from the corners of the wide world  
With long long long Latin names to amaze  
With long long unpronouncable names

So an Englishman built his castle  
At enormous expense, to impress  
And it did, it caused a sensation  
When royalty rolled in as guests yes your Highness  
A Prince and Princess as guests  
But the young owner fell to a heart-attack  
And all who took on the estate  
Were visited by misfortune

One after another met a terrible fate  
So the house gained a reputation  
And sought for a buyer in vain  
Then the thieves and the vandals did their best  
Till the wrecking-ball and bulldozer came shame shame  
Till the growling bulldozer came

A gnarled old beech tree still stands there  
It has seen the great house born and die  
And some day soon it will end its life  
But I will continue with mine a long time  
Yes I will continue with mine  
The stones that are left are all shrouded in green  
With lichen and moss for a cover  
And everywhere ivy is winding its wreath  
But I am no gloomy old funeral-lover  
For I'm back to chuckling my own little way  
Returned to familiar habits  
And what was a lake is a tangle of trees  
And the dam's been busted - by rabbits  
Though the squirrels have faded from red to grey  
And the wild boar's only a symbol  
The shy skipping deer are once again here  
And life is mysterious – yet simple dear people

I know exactly where I'm from  
And I know where I will go  
I'm born of raindrops poured from cloud  
And I run to the river below I know  
I run run run run to the river below

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## ***BALLAD OF FRIZINGHALL***

*on CD "Baildon Sky Rocket" and YouTube channel*

All of a sunlit morning  
The Manningham Minstrel recalls  
The noble Sir Robert de Frizing  
Rode out from his Norman hall  
Six/seven miles out on his rideabout  
Through glinting glade of greenwood  
He clip-clopped into a bright clearing  
Where the woodman's homestead stood

Singing Whoa! Slow, my strong steed oh  
Just look at what we have here-oh

For there in the sunlit morning  
The woodman's daughter he spied  
By far the most beautiful maiden  
He had ever seen in his life  
Maid! He exclaimed, you know my name  
And all on my land obey me  
For I am the Lord of the Frizing Hall  
And you shall be its lady

She sang No! Go! On your strong steed go  
My home's with my father here-oh

But Sir Robert commanded his henchmen  
To escort her there and then  
Unmolested back to his mansion  
Where he solemnly offered his hand  
But in sheer contempt of his blandishment  
She cried "I'm the woodman's daughter,  
If you follow your will, myself I'll kill  
And haunt you ever after"

Sing woe, woe and ever more woe  
If you keep me prisoner here-oh

As the moon came up in the evening  
Said Sir Robert "To God I'll pray"  
Full sure that the sun in the morning  
Would melt her defiance away  
But then with the dawn he came upon  
A sunlit sight most awful  
With a hunting knife she had taken her life  
Her beauty cold as marble

Sing No! No, how was I to know  
She wouldn't be my lady dear-oh

Then framed with in the doorway  
The dead maiden's father appeared  
Saying "Curses upon you Norman brutes  
For the suffering you brought here  
Within one year you will die, I swear  
No child to call you father  
Last of your kin, your home in ruin  
No stone upon another

And so no-one ever will know  
That Frizing Hall stood here-oh"

And there in the sunlit morning  
Sir Robert's hopes lay dashed  
And the woodman collapsed before him  
He'd spoken and breathed his last  
With his beautiful child lying at his side  
And woodland flowers a-plenty  
To the tears of the knight, they were wrapped in white  
And laid to rest most gently

God repose their souls and the curse will go  
And I'll not live on in fear-oh

All of a sunlit noontide  
A twelve-month on but a day  
Sir Robert in a woodland meadow  
Laid down on a bundle of hay  
Small sting in the ear from a creature there  
By evening grew stronger  
E'er midnight's chime he lost his mind  
And leapt from his Hall's verandah  
And lo! his abode in a decade or so  
In the wood had disappeared-oh

And as for the Manningham Minstrel  
Who witnessed what went on  
He was afflicted by the old man's curse  
And turned into a black swan  
Condemned to survive a long, long life  
But never to sing nor play  
And though he knows full well where it all befell  
He can never give the secret away

© Eddie Lawler 2004

## **'Arry RIP**

*Harry Ramsden's - now it's the ballad | Food | The Guardian*  
*on CD 'From 'Ere end Elsewhere'*

We all agree what lives today tomorrow will be gone  
But 'ere's a piece of 'istory that cannot go unsung  
A lad of local legend whose achievement's been destroyed  
Will not be left to go unmourned into the global void

'Twere in Bradford after t' First World War that 'Arry made a smell  
Just on t' end o' Bower Street straight up from Jacob's Well  
Midst mills and terraced 'ouses all the folk enjoyed the whiff  
That aroma were a chip 'oil, 'Arry fryin' fish and chips

And 'Arry and 'is missus fried seven days a week bar none  
And soon up Westgate t' Cosy Caff became the second one  
Tiled black and white wi' 'untin' prints they were on a solid winner  
Wi' 'ungry shoppers stoppin' off for a Bradford fried fish dinner

Chorus It were 'Arry written with an H and then pronounced without  
And 'Arry were a wick 'un and an 'ero 'ereabouts

But disaster struck when t' missus, as was Beatrice by name  
Were stricken wi' consumption, 'twas that Bradford smog to blame  
So 'Arry sought fresh air for 'er, away from t' dark satanic  
They'd have to ply the trade and fry elsewhere upon the planet

And thus they flitted to White Cross and bought a wooden 'ut  
And in a trice that appetisin' whiff come waftin' up  
And grew a queue as perfect proof the Ramsdens 'ad bought wisely  
In whiffin' range of a flippin' great pram-factory in Guiseley

Alas our 'Arry's lass she didn't last there very long  
Which made 'Arry more determined and he fried on and on  
Fresh fish from a brand new edifice, the 'ut 'ad 'ad its day  
Cos now it were a rest'raunt, not just a takeaway

Chorus 'is name were 'Arry wi' an H, wrote large but not expressed  
Them as puts the H on 'Arry, 'ave 'ad ther chips, no less

But it wasn't just the factory folk 'at flocked to 'Arry's door  
They came on t' tram and t' charabang, on two wheels and on four  
And t' ramblers as went ambling up and down from Otley Chevin  
Would finish wi' fish at 'Arry's, it were bloomin' close to 'eaven  
Two 'undred folk could wine and dine 'neath crystal chandeliers  
And it soon become a landmark which 'as lasted all these years  
You could tell the time by 'Arry's clock an' tell it with a smile  
"Harry Ramsden" (H at 10 o'clock), twelve symbols on the dial

It were back in 1963 our 'Arry passed away  
But would 'e 'ave a rotten shock if 'e come back today  
The owners 'ave disposed of it, said it were losin' brass  
'Arry, if 'e 'ad the chance, 'd ask "Whose fault is that?"

Chorus It were 'Arry with an H, as large and clear as rugger posts  
But 'Arry's H is silent, as silent as in GHOST

Of course this sad development's just a chapter of the tale  
Where county and 'ole country is just one big jumble-sale  
Wi' no respect for 'istory, tradition, local culture  
And everything is pickin's for the money-grabbin' vulture

The locals shed a salty tear, but see through the mullarkey  
It's all to do with puttin' up another supermarket  
But there's plenty fryin' fish round 'ere wi' gumption, skill and brains  
So though we're bruised, we'll not be battered, not be trapped in chains

Whereas the chain with Harry's name (the H must be pronounced)  
Is in Stratford 'stead 'o Bradford, and in sev'ral seaside towns  
In Saudi , 'ong Kong, Singapore, you name it, anywhere  
Except o' course West Yorkshire, well they wouldn't bloody\*\* dare

Chorus So there's Harry as a logo, just another plastic brand  
And 'Arry ' oo's an icon, local 'ero, businessman

© Eddie Lawler 2012

\*\* "ruddy" for audiences of gentle disposition

## ***SONG FOR THE TOPIC***

*on CD 'Saltaire'll Do' and YouTube channel*

In the heart of Bradford you hear songs  
Of bravery and boldness  
Praise and of protest  
Of soldiers, sailors  
Victories and failures  
In distant lands and in our own backyard  
And mostly with a chorus  
And always.....from the heart

The Topic is a Chorus Song  
To echo down the years to come  
As long as there is Thursday  
The song will run and run

In the heart of Bradford you hear ballads  
Of death and dereliction  
Love and resurrection  
Full of fun full of fear  
Songs of peace, songs of war  
Of King Billy, Barleycorn and Bonaparte  
Mostly with a chorus  
And always.....from the heart

The Topic is a Chorus Song  
To echo down the years to come  
As long as there is Thursday  
The song will run and run

In the very heart of Bradford there are folk  
Who raise their voice  
To accompanying noises  
From things you pluck, things you blow  
Drums you bang and strings you bow  
Things that rattle and that ring  
Concertinas, mandolins  
Banjos ukuleles and guitars  
And mostly with a chorus  
And always.....from the heart

The Topic is a Chorus Song  
To echo down the years to come  
As long as there is Thursday  
The song will run and run

The Topic is a chorus song  
To echo down the years to come  
Keep ringing on when we're all gone  
For many many birthdays  
As long as there is Thursday  
The song will run and run

On and on

© Eddie Lawler 2016

## **EMILY'S SONG**

*Emily Brontë's Song on CD 'Baildon Sky Rocket' and YouTube channel*

I love the hills of Yorkshire  
I'm a part of the Pennine moors  
The valleys with all variations of green  
The sun, the clouds mirrored in the stony walls

I feel so at home here somehow  
It's as if I'd been shaped with the land  
There's mystery and wild magic around  
Yet seems made by a familiar hand

It's a home of hard and soft the same time  
It's both grim and gentle in its guise  
Gives the feeling true that my feet are free  
And some other part deep down inside

It's to do with something I will call REAL  
Moments of heaven, moments of hell  
Through pleasure and passion, through torment and pain  
Till the beauty rings out like a bell

It's to do as well with my Irish father  
Whose Cornish lady lies long in the grave  
The colour of his hair upon my head  
His inscrutability in my face

Perhaps Mourne Mountains gave him the gift  
For there's poetry runs through his prose  
A fire that of a sudden ignites in the breast  
He has a music that strikes the soul

I love the hills of Yorkshire.... *(repeat first verse)*

© Eddie Lawler 1999

## **BRONTE RAILRAP**

*(not "Folkie") on CD 'Bradford Canal' and YouTube channel*

*(Whistle – Hoot)* Everybody on  
The train now standing on Platform One  
I can imagine Charlotte and Emily  
Two young ladies from the Brontë family  
Sitting with a ticket to Euston station  
Heading for a Euro destination  
Bonnets on their heads and cases on the rack  
And off they go to Brussels – and back

*(Whistle – Hoot)* Waiting for you  
The train now standing on Platform Two  
I can see Branwell the brother they loved  
Station-master at Luddendenfoot  
A new departure for a bright young man  
But soon he's right off the rails again  
When little sister Anne tries to set things right  
He falls in love with Mr Robinson's wife

*(Whistle - Hoot)* Attention please  
The train now standing on Platform Three  
And I can see Emily gaze at the tracks  
Longing to be riding on the one going back  
Half of the ticket says you're going to be alone  
The other half promises you're going back home  
Cos home's where her heart is yearning to be  
The only place on earth where she knows she's free

*(Whistle – Hoot)* All aboard  
The train now standing on Platform Four  
Keighley to London it's Charlotte again  
And she's a celeb now, suddenly it's fame  
Novels they wrote in the name of Bell  
Flying off the shelves to the posh clientele  
There in the limelight, little Yorkshire lass  
Whizzing to the capital – first class

*(Whistle - Hoot)* Just arrived  
The train now standing on Platform Five  
Sitting by the window, little sister Anne  
Heading for the seaside, never to return  
Ready for the terminus called TB  
That killed her Branwell and her Emily  
Her last train journey, to gaze upon the sea  
She told the clerk "Scarborough – single, please"

Reverend Patrick now distressed  
With only his daughter Charlotte left  
Yet the sisters have now put Haworth up there  
For literary visitors from everywhere  
But she's caught in the rain and catches a chill  
Patrick's seeing his fear fulfilled  
He's left alone with his prophecy  
"She's not built for a pregnancy"

*(Whistle - Hoot)* Right on time  
Cos we've just reached the end of the Brontë line

## ***THE STATE OF BRADFORD***

*(protest at THE HOLE in Bfd Centre)*

"Pity Poor Bradford" the lady's ghost said  
To the Earl of Newcastle on his Bolling Hall bed  
Next day he'd lay waste to the town, he declared  
No mother, no child to be spared

But he called off that massacre of Bradford then and there  
The Civil War's horrors moved on to elsewhere  
But go to Bradford today and take one look around  
And you'll see that it's massacred now

In the Second World War we got off very light  
Just a few German bombs hit the centre one night  
It was when peace broke out the destruction began  
And since then it goes on and on

We looked on as our swish Swan Arcade met its end  
We were shocked to watch packed Kirkgate Market condemned  
A unique Central Library brought low in days  
Local history swept clean away

Not to mention two stations both razed to the ground  
Their replacements moved further away from the town  
Every trace of old Tyrrel Street flattened and bare  
Now they call it Centenary Square

City Hall has survived, for the powers that be  
To look out of their windows and what can they see?  
To the West empty property seeking a role  
To the East just a gigantic hole

But the civic establishment still had the cheek  
To shout "Capital of Culture", it fair makes you weep  
When they've wasted five decades in wrecking the best  
To leave us this hell of a mess

And the final mad project's a lake, would you guess  
To mirror grey cloud that sweeps over our heads  
So the wind can howl freely round Jack Priestley's coat  
Whistling: "Thank You - for nowt"

A city-centre that offers you nothing at all  
'Cept a dip in a pond or a jump down a hole  
Is an achievement that fully deserves the award:  
Capital of Nowhere-at-All

So we say to the ghost who once haunted our city  
You can toddle off home love, there's nowt left to pity.....  
Or roll up them long sleeves and get cracking and then  
We'll build Bradford back up again

© Eddie Lawler 2009

## **SONG FOR KATIE**

*for Bradford harpist Fiona-Katie Roberts  
on CD 'From 'Ere and Elsewhere' and YouTube channel*

I live in the valley, she lives on the hill  
And though it puts a penny on her energy bills  
She's happy up there, breathing fresh air  
With a view that goes on for miles  
Hears the earth in tune with the sun and moon  
Cos she's a natural

Chorus With strings for her fingers and bells on her toes  
She brings music wherever she goes

Down here in the hustle and the hurry of town  
I forget my worries when she comes around  
She brings magic a while, casting her spell  
Turning melodies into smiles  
I see faces charmed by a sweep of her arm  
Cos she's a natural

Chorus

Should you ever need her, she's easy to find  
Switch on your computer, google one of a kind  
And very soon she'll be there, a breath of fresh air  
Making music and miles of smiles  
That's her energy, help yourself, it's free  
Cos she's a natural

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## WALKING TO BRADFORD

*(protest at Iraq War)*

*on CD "Baildon Sky Rocket"*

2002, and there we were walking  
From Manningham Park to Centenary Square  
Lots of us picking up a chant from the little Muslim girls  
Keeping us cheerful, and getting us there  
It goes Bush Bush, we know you  
You father was a bomber too

2003 and there we were gawping  
Televised images live from Iraq  
We didn't send our boys out there  
But a Shipley neighbour's the first one back  
It's rough tough it's Thatcher's Law  
Each Prime Minister needs a war

2004 and there's no stopping  
Death every day, no sign of an end  
Numbskull Westerners out of their depth  
It's Vietnam all over again  
But hush hush, better not say  
How many more have died today

2005 and there I was singing  
Same as I did three years ago  
It's an invasion, an occupation  
Led by liars, an illegal war  
You Bush Puppy Tony Blair  
You're the naked emperor

2006 and the song's getting boring  
Arrogant folly is at it again  
Shred all your history books and sling 'em on the home fires  
And wait for the news from Afghanistan  
The poppy-fields have all returned  
When will they ever learn?

© Eddie Lawler 2005/6

*My first broadcast protest song! BBC Radio Leeds - a recent version now on YouTube channel*

How would you like to do your shopping in a dream-store?  
All under one roof and on one floor  
With never a drop of rain yet in the broad daylight  
Service with a smile and the prices just right

A place with – coats and suits and hobnail-boots  
Screws and hooks and new and old books  
Pots and pans and pies and peas  
Overalls and dungarees  
Babywear and lingerie  
Tasty snacks and cups of tea  
Flowers, flatcakes, furnishings  
Bradawls, bibles, bracelets, rings  
And anything that fits into a basket

Now this just isn't half as daft as it appears  
There was such a place in Bradford and they had it a hundred years  
Right slap bang in the centre of the town  
And Bradford was so proud of it they knocked it all down

Cos the planners and the Council they condemned it  
And all the stallholders given notice to quit  
And to move to newly-built accommodation instead  
Cos this one was Victorian and they're all stone dead

So all those (*chorus as above*)....Everything just had to be restructured

I bet you anyone from the South would think you're crazy  
You might as well cut the nose from off of your face  
For Bradford is no metropolis with no Fleet Street, no Pall Mall  
So they decided to make it the capital of nowhere-at-all

And so the building was left in chimney-muck and bird-lime  
With cobwebs to decorate the girders' grime  
But to spite official policy mother nature wouldn't comply  
And the old accursed edifice wouldn't curl up and die

And all those (*chorus as above*)....Were flourishing, and business was as usual

For all those steps and walls and gates were made to last long  
Much longer than the speculators itching to make a bomb  
And who bury their heads in building-sand refusing to realise  
That it paid for itself, was purpose-built and teeming with life

But the authorities declared the cost outrageous  
To give the place a clean-up and a couple coats of gloss  
While it was clear as daylight to everyone else around  
That it's certainly not the market we ought to knock down

Stand up for (*chorus as above*)

....and everything that was Bradford's Kirkgate Market

© Eddie Lawler c 1973

## ***SPINNING AND WEAVING***

I'll sing of a Bradford magician Proud citizen from Manningham way  
Who carries on Bradford's tradition Of spinning and weaving for a living today  
In the shadow of old Lister's Mill He perfected the art of the conjuror's skill

Now you see it, now you don't Leaving you feeling a bit of a dope  
You'll swear that you saw it in front of you there  
Next thing it's vanished straight into thin air  
And you're out Hear the shout No doubt about that Ow-zat

Maybe sport is not your obsession Maybe cricket isn't your game  
But I'm not for keeping you guessing Adil Rashid's the Bradfordian's name  
And he's giving the leather a twirl Spinning and weaving his way round the world

There it was, there it wasn't Maybe he has, or maybe he hasn't  
You could read the maker's name on the ball  
But it turns out you really read nothing at all  
And you're out Hear the shout No doubt about that Ow-zat

You're wondrin' what's coming up next  
Only he knows, it's anyone's guess  
He'll hypnotize and surprise yer  
With a leg-break? A googly? Top-spinner? A slider?  
You marched out so proudly to bat  
Now you're truly bamboozled and on your way back

A twist of the wrist – you swish and you miss  
Just when you thought you could hit it for six  
You're bowled all ends up by an absolute snorter  
Or baffled and snaffled cos somebody's caught yer  
You're out Hear the shout No doubt about that Ow-zat

So Adil keep on spinning so England keep winning  
Keep on weaving from Lords to Dunedin  
Long may your fame / grace the art of the game  
And when the game's over may you bequeath  
Your gift as a model, to coach and to teach  
Your marriage of skill with complete dedication  
To Bradford, to Yorkshire and all cricket nations.

A twist of the wrist – you swish and you miss  
There is was – and there it wasn't  
Thought you saw it? No, you didn't

Thank you Adil but don't pack up yet  
There's matches to play and there's wickets to get  
You're not out No not yet One more over today  
You've not finished bowling, just ask Virat Kohli  
Adil Rashid – MBE - Play!

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## THE BIG BANG SONG

### *Intro (optional)*

If there's nothing, what comes next?  
No answer? I think science says  
If you hear a Big Bang, that must be the birth  
Of our flipping great, beautiful universe – BANG!!

There is a house in Primrose Lane  
In Gilstead, with a claim to fame  
For in this house was born and bred  
A chap called Fred(*spoken: Fred Oo?? Fred. Fred 'Oyle.....*  
*Oh alright Sir Fred Hoyle, it says it, on the plaque there, on the woyle*)  
A man who was in many eyes  
Deserving of the Nobel Prize  
This is the home of the very man  
You're quoting when you say BIG BANG

And this is what he said, this Fred:  
"Owt outa nowt?? You're kidding me  
That's just a fanciful fantasy  
Nowt comes out of what is not  
Crackpot theory, tell you what  
I'll call it – boo-boo-boom - BIG BANG

Fearless Fred had a theory of his own  
Chose to have a bit of fun  
Take the mick out of the notion  
First comes a huge explosion  
That tickled Fred, who ridiculed  
A system based on a miracle  
Summat else is bound to explain  
Those galaxies over Primrose Lane  
Yes Fred from Gilstead was the man  
Who gave the world the words BIG BANG

In this respect Fred has his critics  
But not in the field of astrophysics  
He's acknowledged as the Master  
Of what the planets and the stars are  
Proved with solid evidence  
The origin of elements  
And make some sense of what  
Fred, and me, and you are made of  
(Fred said:)  
"Owt outa nowt?? You're kidding me  
That's just a fanciful fantasy

Nowt comes out of what is not  
Crackpot theory, I know what  
Let's call it – boo-boo-boom - BIG BANG

And as for guessing where I'm from  
I think I'll ask me Dad and Mum  
Who clearly, dearly loved each other  
Me, three sisters and two brothers  
But as regards the whole creation  
All the rest is speculation  
Thus ends my Fred 'Oyle song  
I haven't got a clue,  
Neither have any of you  
How we all began  
But the way things look we all might end  
All of a sudden, with a ruddy big, bloody big  
BIG BANG                      The End

EL Sept 2025

## OVER THE HILLS

*In passing this is about the Black Dyke Mill but generically  
is about the rise and fall of all the mills in and around Bradford*

Passed by the mill just the other day, it was over the hills and far away  
No sounds of machines no more  
Just echoes on an empty floor

Mills been closed over 30 years, just memories and dried up tears  
Ripped the heart right out of the town  
Felt like the only place was going down

*Chorus x 2* Over the hills  
Over the hills  
Over the hills and far away

Empty now and deserted streets  
No sounds of children or cobbled feet  
Shops have closed and the banks have gone  
The pubs are shut it ain't no fun

*Chorus x 2* Over the hills  
Over the hills  
Over the hills and far away

The mills killed off the old hand looms  
They're playing now to a different tune  
Spinning jennys spin no more, the future opened a different door

*Chorus x 2* Over the hills  
Over the hills  
Over the hills and far away

Now we've seen the mills rise and fall  
Maybe Ned Ludd was right after all  
I'd like to have a drink with old Ned Ludd  
It seems he knew rather more than he should

*Chorus x 2* Over the hills  
Over the hills  
Over the hills and far away  
I passed by the mill just the other day

## **ADVENTURES IN A NORTHERN LANDSCAPE**

*The "mill" is a mix of Saltaire Mill and Black Dyke Mill.  
It was going to be called Adventures in a Yorkshire Landscape but  
Bill Nelson beat me to that name by a large margin back in 1974*

Early morning in the square not many folk around  
Just 2 old boys over there sharing stories about the war  
They come here every day  
And I see the woman from number 49  
she will tell you about her long lost love from 1969

### *Chorus:*

Adventures in a Northern landscape a dirty Northern town  
Where there's not much going on, not much going down  
You can go on an adventure and be home in time for tea  
A dirty old northern town  
That'll do for me  
'Cos that's how I like it, that's how I like it

Hear the boys with their guitars practising in the hall  
They'll never make it big but at least they try  
I head off to find something to eat  
I'll be back the same way in a while  
See young lads playing football in the cobbled back streets  
Dodging in and out of washing lines

### *Chorus*

Rows of terraced houses climbing up the hills  
And down in the valley there's a dark satanic mill  
It's turned into a nightclub now a cafe and a gym  
And they fill it full of modern art to bring the tourists in

### *Chorus*

Over on the edge of town that's where we used to catch the train  
It's luxury apartments now and they all look the same  
And the bright young things with their Teslas and their Porsche  
They like to order in smashed avocado on sourdough  
(I like mine with a poached egg on top)  
Cos that's how I like it  
Yeah that's how I like it

Funny how it hardly changes with the passage of time  
A dirty old Northern town they nearly always looks the same  
You can go on an adventure and be home in time for tea  
A dirty old northern town  
That'll do for me  
That'll do for me

I go into the cafe I wonder who will be there  
It's the 2 old boys who were talking in the square  
I see the guys with their guitars and the woman from 49  
It's no surprise because we come here all the time

On Monday is book club  
Tuesday go to the gym  
Wednesday night is quiz night, see what you know  
And Thursday it's the folk club why don't you come and have a go  
Friday there's a lock in - if you know you know

*Chorus:*

Adventures in a Northern landscape a dirty Northern town  
Where there's not much going on, not much going down  
You can go on an adventure and be home in time for tea  
A dirty old northern town  
That'll do for me  
Yeah cos that's how I like it, that's how I like it

A dirty old Northern town  
A dirty old Northern town  
A dirty old Northern town  
That's how I like it

***I LOVE THIS TOWN***

at the top of the glen watching the sun go down  
Then I'll walk down through the park stroll along the canal  
Then up to the ale house to sit and wait for my pal  
With a Saltaire Blonde that's calling to me

I met my love outside the half moon cafe  
We sat and talked and while the time away  
Watching the cricket taking it nice and slow  
Just taking it easy nowhere special to go  
And as I walked her home I knew I'd found my place

See all my life I've moved around  
Lived here and there never settled down  
But then I met you and you brought me to this place  
I bless the day that I found you

So come and join us here at festival time  
Take in the music have a few beers or some wine  
And tip your hat whether it's rain or sun  
To the good folks who work to bring this festival home  
And let's party until the sun goes down

## ***THE BAND PLAYED ON BROADWAY***

G

I used to live in the wind and rain

C

G

Holes in my shoes where the water came in

We'd scrape the ice from the window pane

And when it snowed we'd go tobogganing

G

Steep streets and sandstone mills

C

G

D

That was old Bradford town

G

With hand rails running up and down the hills

C

D

G

So we wouldn't fall down

C

D

G

And it seems so long ago, and it seems like yesterday

When the Singers sang a song and the band played on Broadway

C

G

D

G

And it was play for your life, juggle for your life

Sing for your life, dance for your life *Repeat*

It was "Maggie, Maggie, Maggie" and the Miners' Strike

"No Poll Tax!", "No Nuclear War!"

The fascists were smashing up the peace in Bradford

and peace is what we were playing for

We sang "Free Nelson Mandela"

The Africans know you have to sing for change  
And the climate call was a thundering whisper  
“Fifty years remain”

C            D        G

And it seems so long ago, and it seems like yesterday  
When the Singers sang a song and the band played on Broadway

C            G        D            G

And it was play for your life, Juggle for your life  
Sing for your life, Dance for your life            *Repeat*

We stamped our feet to Old Joe Zydeco, Juggler Sam threw a rope on the ground  
The crowd went crazy to the Punjab dancers and the street band’s powerful sound  
Jasper threw his diabolo high – now he’s up in the sky  
And we laughed and we danced till the night was over – I tell you no lie

C            D G            C D G

And we Raised the Roof at Festival time

C        D        G            D

And we filled the streets with love

C    D    G            C    D G

But the wind still wears the stone away

C            D            G

And the rain still falls from above

But still it’s play for your life, juggle for your life  
Sing for your life, dance for your life

*Repeat . . . add “Seems so long ago . . .”*

## KOMIC KARNIVAL

On a Saturday in September 19 hundred and one  
in a field just outside Bradford  
the fun had just begun  
ladies, gentleman children too  
queued up outside the gate  
for the greatest show in town  
hurry up now don't be late

*Roll up roll up get your tickets  
for the Komic Karnival*

*It's the day we've all been waiting for*

*It'll be so magical*

*We've got sugary lions and windy pops  
we've got everyone's favourite band*

*From*

*ONAPLANKABOONABANKATOTHER SIDE OF BUCCO  
ONAPLANKABOONABANKATOTHER SIDE OF BUCCO*

Doctor Todds got his hospital  
for broken auld wheelheads  
Saville will make you wooden shoes  
for tender feet and legs

They've got water that is arsenic free  
and niff naffs from our Mary  
Peter's there with his big brown cow

and Walt with his canary

If you're feeling peckish come on now step inside

The pie and tender gravy shop  
it'll warm up your insides  
see Clara for summat sweet  
like parkin and ginger pops

And if you need your pin points sharpening go and see the Prof

*Roll up roll up....*

Ebor will prove his abilities  
as he gently examines your bumps

The haunted old hall will leave you trembling

with things that make you jump  
Bob the barber will mend your gamp  
and fit you with new ribs

and Volodovski with his performing bear

will have you all in fits

Wilsden brass band will play selections of music for you  
to dance

And participants of comic costumes  
best get up will have a chance  
Jim Tenor's the agent for mystic soap  
which washes, blues and bleaches  
and a procession prompt at 2 o'clock  
from the view of paradise

*Roll up, roll up....*

# WILSDEN CRICKET CLUB

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The Committee have pleasure in announcing a Grand

# KOMIC KARNIVAL

## AND CRICKET MATCH, LADIES VERSUS GENTLEMEN,

In the Cricket Field, on Saturday, September 21st, 1901.

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## WILSDEN BRASS BAND

WILL HEAD A

## GURT COMICAL PROCESSION,

Starting from the View of Paradise at 2-30, prompt. Participants will appear in Comio Costumes, **TWO PRIZES** being given for the best rig out. First and Second **PRIZES** will also be given for the best get-up in the **CYCLE PARADE**.

### THE NOTED BAND FROM ONAPLANKABOONABANKATOTHERSIDEBUCCO

Has been very specially engaged for this occasion. CONDUCTOR: The Celebrated O. CORNOPEON, O.P.Q.

### Volodovoski and his Performing Antedeluvian Bear

## RED KITES OVER THE CHEVIN

Intro G Em C / D G

|                                  |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| <i>Red kites over the Chevin</i> | G Em    |
| <i>Red kites up on the wing</i>  | C D     |
| <i>Red kites over the Chevin</i> | G Em    |
| <i>Oh it's a beautiful thing</i> | C / D G |

|                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Out across the park                 | Em / C |
| And over the railway bridge         | D G    |
| Through the field with the oak tree | Em / C |
| And up onto the ridge               | D G    |
| To the pub, on the old high road    | C D    |

### *Chorus*

Two old friends trading news  
I guess it's been a while  
Evening sunshine and beers  
It's enough to make you smile  
Catch these moments, as they pass

### *Chorus*

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Catch these moments, as they pass | C D |
| Catch these moments, as they pass | C D |

### *Chorus*

*Oh it's a beautiful thing....*

2/8/2020

## ***THE KILLING OF THE BRADFORD BOAR***

Come, who will end its reign of terror  
This fearsome beast which roams about these parts  
Wreaks havoc on our land and property  
And strikes great fear in all our hearts

A price upon its head  
A parcel of land in store  
All for the killing of the Bradford Boar

Bold John de Northrop went a' hunting  
Both pig and prize he sought to take  
Kept vigil by the well, deep in Cliffe Wood  
'Til it came forth, its thirst to slake

Two arrows straight and true  
A parcel of land in store  
All for the killing of the Bradford Boar

Being too great a weight, he left the carcass  
Removed its tongue as proof of its demise  
Then by and by, a second huntsman  
Chancing upon it could scarce believe his eyes

Cut off its head and to the manor  
With this propitious find he made great haste  
Arriving prior to John de Northrop  
Who failed to equal so brisk a pace

'My Lord, the deed is done  
A parcel of land in store  
All for the killing of the Bradford Boar'

Then in strode John, bearing his trophy  
'This brazen charlatan I'll soon prove wrong  
For you'll discover on close inspection  
'Twas I who severed this wild boar's tongue

I stake my rightful claim  
To the parcel of land in store  
All for the killing of the Bradford boar

The prize was granted on condition  
That he'd thrice blow upon the gelder's horn  
Once every year in Bradford market square  
That being on St Martin's morn

Those lands around Hunt Yard  
He earned as just reward  
All for the killing of The Bradford Boar

Those lands around Hunt Yard  
He earned as just reward  
All for the killing of The Bradford Boar

*A song about the tragic fire at Bradford City's Valley Parade football ground on the 11th May, 1985.  
Released in 2017 on my first solo album 'Dog Songs'. Available at: <https://lewispugh.bandcamp.com/>*

A time for celebration in a theatre made from trees  
A vessel raised above their heads in glory on their knees  
A sea of smile and laughter which quickly turned to fright  
A careless spark was all it took for the Valley to ignite.

A waterfall of people flow into the sea of green  
A burning man weaves back and forth across the awful scene  
A crowd of watchers feel the heat , the flames still more to raise  
The Valley turns to ashes amid the stricken cries.

*He took her by the hand and said, "I love you 'till the end"  
Hell broke loose around them but on him she could depend  
She laid her head upon his chest and heard his beating heart  
She closed her eyes and held his hand, waited to depart.*

How do? How do? We've never met but I'm friends with you.

So long. So long since we had a break like other big towns do.

Bradford, or anywhere!

He walked. Jesus walked. He waved to all the children on the shaws of butter.

"Not like the good old days" the old folks mutter.

Just take my hand and my heart starts to flutter now.

Bradford, or anywhere!

How do? How do? We've never met but I'm friends with you.

So long. So long since we had a break like other big towns do.

Bradford, or anywhere! Or anywhere!

Lyrics & music by Matthew Broadbent

There was no school that day and nob'dy came to play  
I spent the day up on the moors  
I laid back in the grass and watched the clouds go past  
I just like being out of doors

And then, at half past three, this lady came to me as she was  
picking flowers  
She said "it's a strange way for a boy to spend the day  
just wasting his precious hours

I'd seen 'er face before, somewhere, but I'm not sure  
I must 'ave seen 'er in the church  
'Er dad's the parson there but that is one place where  
me fam'ly never seem to go that much

She said 'er name was Anne, 'er brother's name is Bran,  
'er sisters, by 'arf, are far too clever  
She 'as to work all day, she gets no time to play  
well, sometimes, but 'ardly ever.

She told me she'd sneaked out when nobody was about  
But, now that she's thirteen, she never should 'ave been  
kept in and med to read, when there's squirrels outside and birds to feed  
and tadpoles in the beck.'er father sez she's reckless.

Each weekend we'd run down the cobbled streets o' town  
and meck the sparks fly off 'ar clogs.  
We'd eat some butterscotch and, sometimes, stop to watch  
the travellin' show wi' clowns and dancin' dogs.

I know I'm only ten but I'll grow up an' then I'll marry my Annie Bronte.  
We'll walk out on the moors, she won't 'ave to stay indoors  
unless, of course, she really wants ter.

Today, I left me bed. At breakfast, my dad said "we're movin' to a bigger town  
Me dad's been put in charge at Mr Tetley's yard, there's money there  
andso we must move soon.

Me mam said "it's not nice, Leeds is no paradise but, in these 'ard times,  
we'd best be canny.  
Next Sund'y, 'arf past three, I know that that will be the last time  
I ever see my Annie.

**ST. LUKES TO SCHOLEMOOR** *(IS A LONG LONG WAY)*

Dad and lad went walking - I was almost five  
 and when we got to Wibsey Top - we could see for miles  
 he said son there's your future - the cradle to the grave  
 from St Lukes to Scholemoor - is a long long way

he told me there's explorers and they walk around the world  
 but Friday night in this town a boy'll meet a girl  
 they'll settle down and marry and in this town they'll stay  
 from St Lukes to Scholemoor - is a long long way

(chorus)

A mile as the crow flies to get from a to b  
 But it'll take a lifetime for folk like you and me  
 From young and going places  
 To old and going grey  
 From St Lukes to Scholemoor is a long long way

I grew up like he told me - rooted in this town  
 and sure enough one Friday night - me sweetheart came around  
 a mill girl up at Listers - she lived two streets away

a wife and kids and mortgage a job with take home pay  
 two weeks Blackpool guest house thats your holiday  
 a place to do me drinking in - me work and rest and play  
 from St Lukes to Scholemoor - is a long long way

the kids have grown and gone now the wife wants someplace warm  
 we sold up and we packed up - moved to Benidorm  
 but home is where the heart is we came back home again  
 from St Lukes to Scholemoor - is a long long way

i've reached me destination but i can't afford a hole  
 so fan those dying embers throw on some more coal  
 and scatter all me ashes out on Little Horton Lane  
 from St Lukes to Scholemoor - is a long long way

A song chronicling the life and death of yer average local. These days Bradford Royal Infirmary is the sole maternity hospital - when I was born it was in St. Luke's hospital on Little Horton Lane. Most funerals at this end of town take place at Scholemoor Cemetery. The distance between them being "a mile as the crow flies"

## ***WHERE WE ONCE WERE***

I know a place where I can watch the smoke rising  
Look down on town, helps to clear my mind

And life goes on, I watch through my open window  
These hills are mine, land I hold so dear

I'm the one who said that people are the only way for me  
But I don't always need you with me now  
There's a memory of where we once were

I know a place where mountains stretch the horizon  
It's air is mine, helps to clear my mind

I know a place, my soul is part of the landscape  
I go there still, helps to clear my mind  
Helps to clear my mind...

© P.Cockerham 2024 (*from earlier work*)

This song was originally written in response to my many visits to the high hills north of Bradford, in particular those above Shipley and Baildon.

I have regularly visited these parts throughout my life, from being a young child to the present day and whilst the towns have grown and changed, the most beautiful spots above them remain largely as I first encountered them, a lifetime ago. I have often watched the sun set from there and I still return regularly in order to recharge my soul.

Robbie Martin

## ***THE WORKERS IN THE MILL***

(to the tune of The British Grenadiers)

Some talk of Cunliffe Lister and some of Titus Salt  
of Jowett and of Forster and such great names as these  
but of all Bradford's heroes there's nothing to compare  
with a "Oy you! get o'er here!" The workers in the Mill

The Noble comb could not be stopped by troops of Gen'ral Ludd  
They felt the power of t' bosses to keep their wages low  
But our union men do know it and organise once more  
with a "Oy you! get o'er here!" The workers in the Mill

Whenever we're instructed to work unsocial hours  
Our stewards check the rule book and we're on time an' half  
We work all hours god sends us to keep the wolf at bay  
With a "Oy you! get o'er here!" The workers in the Mill

Whilst profits keep on rising our wages remain low  
Trans-nationals take over with Governments in tow  
Trades unions sell insurance, it's global now you know  
with a "Oy you! get o'er here!" The workers in the Mill

So celebrate with caution the bubble it will burst  
when profits take a nosedive it will hit the workers first  
Come Brothers and Sisters, we're fighting side by side  
with a "Oy you! get o'er here!" The workers in the Mill

I wrote this as an example of a political song for the *Raise Your Banners* International Festival of Political Song held in Bradford in 2009. It was not entered into the competition of that festival. It was first performed by 'Into The Buttercup' at the Topic Folk Club in the Irish Club, and in various places since.

Richard Eccles (lyrics)  
Simon Kelly (music)

## **MARTHA BREAR**

You walked the same sweet streets round here  
Amelia, Albert, Victoria  
You promised me you'd never marry  
You'd always keep your name, my sweet, my dear  
Martha free, my Martha dear, sweet Martha Brear

I wait for you to fly to me  
From the crowd of girls in clogs and shawls  
And we go as far as the day allows  
Away from the mill's black walls and shadows  
Me and Martha, Martha free, my Martha Brear

The children played in empty streets  
The mothers stood callin on the steps  
Now the sound of cars fills our heads instead  
And the mill's been shut but the light plays tricks  
And my Martha's dancing still down Constance Street

And the rain comes drifting often through the hills  
The way your spirit fills all these places  
So much has changed, so much is still the same  
My Martha Brear you would still love it here  
Sweet Martha free, sweet Martha dear

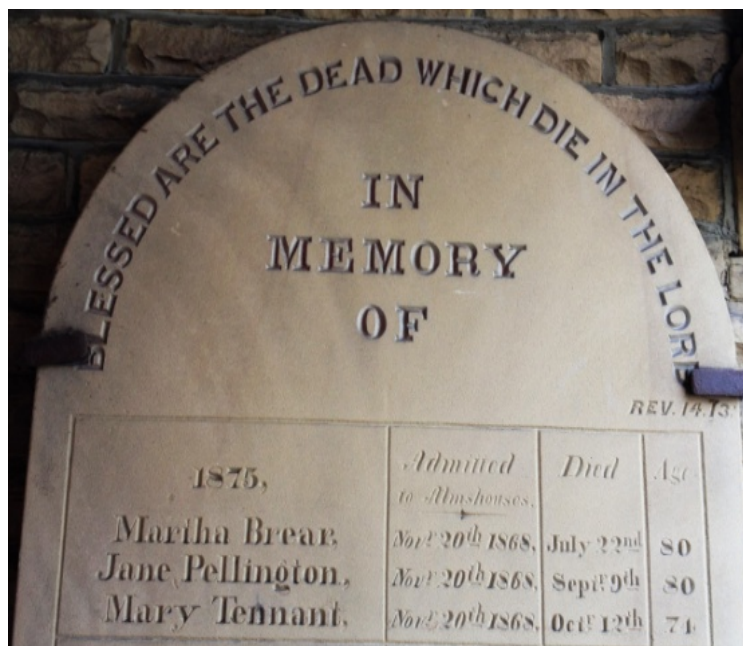
The hours were long the women worked  
In the twilight world of Titus Salt  
And you were born before Waterloo  
You had to pledge your life to servitude  
Never to become a mother or a wife

When I'm far from home I hear  
How my heart yearns for you to appear  
When I loosed my Martha's long brown hair  
As the rain fell soft on the River Aire  
In the brand new town that buried Martha Brear

And the rain comes drifting often through the hills  
The way your spirit fills all these places  
So much has changed so much is still the same  
My Martha Brear you would still love it here  
Sweet Martha free, sweet Martha dear

You walked the same sweet streets round here  
 Amelia, Albert, Victoria  
 Now the sound of cars fills our heads instead  
 And the mill's been shut but the light plays tricks  
 And my Martha's dancing still down Constance Street

*Simon P Kelly:* Originally from Birmingham, I've lived and worked in Saltaire since 2003. I have been the music half of a songwriting partnership with poet/author Richard Eccles for nearly 40 years. We started writing in the indie-pop idiom but transitioned to more folky acoustic material by the late 90's. I started performing our songs solo at open mics and low-key gigs in 2005. 'Martha Brear' was written around 2011.



*Richard Eccles:* Some time ago, I can't remember where or when, we came up with the idea of a collection of songs about Saltaire, with a provisional title of 'Heirs of Saltaire'. I liked the rhyme and rhythm of those three words and the idea that those who live there and care about the place have been given something special to look after and enjoy. And then one day, when I was snooping around, reading all the bits and pieces of stuff that offer insights into its history, I came across the name Martha Brear, engraved in one of the doorways of the almshouses on Victoria Road. A beautiful row of little cottages for the retired folk from one of Titus' mills with red, green and blue doors and arched porches. Inside one of those, Martha is commemorated.

My mother was a Brear and it's a good old Yorkshire name, hardly known outside the county, and I don't know if I'm related to Martha in anyway, but she stuck in my mind. The Victorian mill owners discovered the advantages of employing female workers and, Titus particularly, rewarded them with health care and pensions and security. The price these women paid was a singular dedication to the company and foregoing marriage. Like being a nun.

The more I read the more fascinated I became about Martha and the sort of life she might have led. She became a sort of representative of the thousands of otherwise unrecognised women who contributed so much to the wealth of the Salt family and the prosperity, indirectly, of the nation, often at great personal cost. The song imagines her then, and now, floating through the streets of Saltaire to remind us that the past is always with us, and that we too, are just passing through.

## **BRADFORD WATER**

Crossing the water is the reason we're here  
Letting animals drink and graze in the clear  
Waters of the beck  
Good for the sheep and the wool  
And we sing...

*Oh the water of Bradford  
Oh the clear spring  
Always been in Bradford  
Lift your voices and sing*

Then came the navvies to build the canal  
Efficient transport for the goods and wool  
Waters of the cut  
A clear band in a world of soot  
And we sing...

Now look at the place where trollies once brought ya  
Open spaced area of light and water  
Fountains and light  
A wonder at night  
And we sing...

Here's to the water of Centenary Square  
Throw off your troubles and all your cares  
Splash in the pool  
Keep yourself cool  
And we sing...

*Coda*  
Here's to the water of Bradford  
Here's to Centenary Square  
Here's to the water of Bradford  
Here's to being there

*Can be performed solo with shamisen. On the recording; shamisen, water bottle, shaker, tambourine, whistle, tenor recorder.*

***JESUS WALKS THE STREETS OF BRADFORD***

Jesus walks the street from Little Horton  
Jesus walks the street down Church Bank  
As he walks past Chester Street  
With sandals on his feet  
Sammy Ledgard tips his hat to the man

Jesus walks the street in simple clothing  
Jesus keeps his items in a bag  
Over his shoulder  
As the weather grew colder  
Jesus didn't seem to ever lag

M8. Some say he left a wife and family  
Some say he ran away from debt  
Some say that he was wanted  
Yet he smiled at every person that he met

Jesus always waved, we always waved back  
Jesus had a smile broad and warm  
Jesus walked through Bradford weather  
Yet he would never  
Seek shelter from the storm

The last time I saw Jesus he was slowing  
The smile was muted and the wave was gone  
Then I heard his race was run  
And Jesus he had gone  
Jesus, your stories will live on

I've recorded this version with bouzouki, hand drum, two violins, two baritone violins and organ.  
But it's designed to be performed solo with just voice and bouzouki.

Walking from Chain Street, he took a shot  
Saint Thomas, he's still looking for the gun  
As squalor gives way to des-res for the renters  
God help the Beggars

The gate to the west looks east, it's a golden mile of culture  
Saint Pat gets on with the Baptist OK  
They're out in White Abbey, will be drinking late  
It's a long hard road to re-generation  
When there ain't no remuneration

The gate to the west looks east, it's a golden mile of culture  
No work, no bike should I take out a loan?  
Jowett had a vision, yeah, he got things done  
The boys in the barrel stay out all day long  
Out in the City, cause it's where they're from - yeah

The gate to the west looks east, it's a golden mile of culture  
And so, it's up to the 1 in 12  
See Paul at his castle or the IDL  
The fellows in the Star sing Bradford city along  
Down in the valley, this is where I belong

The gate to the west looks east, it's a golden mile of culture

## ***THREE BELLS***

Stories and tales filled the days,  
Imaginary kingdoms so far away,  
But never beyond the old parsonage gate,  
So magical,

Soon they all outgrew the play,  
But kept the dreams flowing some other way,  
Retelling through poems or thoughts in a book,  
So wonderful,

But in times not long passed there was silence,  
The ink would run dry on their words,  
They stood with an act of defiance,  
And would write to be heard,

And those three Bells ring  
Their voices for centuries will sing out  
The pages will turn, as their fire still burns  
And those three Bells ring

Narratives moulded as clay  
Antagonists written into the fray  
Growing experiences setting the scene  
So original

Drama and romance unfurled  
Unleashing such beauty into the world  
Hiding in plain sight their sweet masquerade  
So humble

Their fiction preferred over science  
Many eyes would cast over their words  
In authors a new found reliance  
As their movement was stirred

And those three Bells ring  
Their voices for centuries will sing out  
The pages will turn, as their fire still burns  
And those three Bells ring

## BRADFORD FAIR

If you ever come to Bradford Fair  
 There is no parsley sage and thyme  
 You'll find a piece of worsted cloth  
 Hung at the wool exchange in town  
 And lots of talk of better days  
 All spun by a true love of mine

*This city has trouble sleeping  
 Since the mills all closed yesterday  
 And the tanner spent  
 To pay the rent  
 Don't go so far these days*

Well King Charles he sold the manor  
 So we became a roundhead town  
 Many a time the cannon roared  
 And we woke to the musket sound  
 The cavaliers came and were driven out  
 By Fairfax's rousing shout  
 The old king's money has no place  
 Here – in our Bradford town

### *Chorus*

I was born in a two floor back to back  
 And that's where my youth and stay  
 The passage with the gaslight at the back  
 Would show me home each day  
 We ran the 'Coffee Tavern'  
 On Manningham's smoky streets  
 Spinners, carders and woolcombers  
 Would come our fair to eat

### *Chorus*

#### *A little about the song:*

1. It is mocking the folk song 'Scarborough Fair' - with veiled references to it - 'no parsley sage and thyme'. 'All spun by a true love of mine' Suggesting Bradford is grittier, more down to earth and has a tougher time
2. Several references to its woollen history throughout
3. During the English Civil War it was a puritan town and supported the Roundheads. King Charles had sold Bradford manor to London's citizens to pay his debts - so the area disliked the king and Royalists.
4. The last verse is about my wife's family in the early 1900's. They had several thriving businesses in Manningham - one called the 'Coffee Tavern' opposite Manningham Mills providing meals mainly to the workers there, and a greengrocers and bakers. Kath's gran and mum lived in a typical back to back house in Heaton from the late 1930's - so a brief description of that

## ***MILL-GIRL BALLERINA***

Mary Irene was a child of a mill-town  
Of the valleys and the hills down Bradford way  
Innocent of eye with a smile as fresh as springtime  
And a voice to bring the sunshine to the day

But her fingers weaved for wages away at Rawfolds mill  
She cut her cloth to ribbons of romance of soaring high  
On stages that pirouettes might fill  
But it was only in her dreams that she would dance

To be a ballet queen in between theatres of war time  
With the voices of the poor crying all around  
Was a dream out of reach of a working lass contention  
Would stake a claim to unmentionable ground

But where some would harbour dreams  
Mary sailed on with a passion  
And she practiced with such elegance and poise  
She'd soft step in the schoolroom  
then in the hours she didn't work  
No time to fool around the smirks of boys

And even as her fingers weaved away at Rawfolds mill  
She caught the eye of Russia's greatest dancers calling her  
To stages that pirouettes might fill  
The Russian ballet asked her for her hand

But her mother rued the wages spun at Hunsworth mill  
So she cut her daughters ribbons of romance of soaring  
Why? We never knew be it for love or spite of will  
But Mary's mother said she couldn't dance  
Pirouettes can't fill a purses chance

And she knew in her heart, she'd never get to live that life  
Village lights don't dare to shine so far  
It's hard to see past the pennies, that put the butter on the knife  
To turn a mill-girl ballerina into a star

So Mary Irene never got to be that dancer  
Her shattered dreams of chance that got away  
And now silent stands the mill that woveand warped her promise  
just memories now that fade softer ever day

So her fingers weaved for wages, away at Rawfolds mill  
She cut her cloth to ribbons of romance of soaring high  
On stages that pirouettes might fill  
For it was only in her dreams that she would dance  
Pirouettes can't fill a purses chance...

### *Song notes*

- This is an old song written in April 2007 just after the passing of my paternal grandmother – and it is a true story. She lived all of her life in Birkenshaw, Bradford.
- I don't know if it was supposed to be a family secret or it was just because my great grandmother lived to a ripe old age and was still around for quite a long time - but this story only reached me after my grandma had died.
- Sometimes you have brushers with greatness that aren't obvious to you or meaningful at the time. But it turns out that my grandmother – Mary – was asked to join the Russian ballet whilst still a young girl.
- Following your dreams has never been easy and for a young Yorkshire lass in the early 20th century, in the lean times between the wars—the family's need for money made them impossible.
- My great grandmother, Mary's mother – decreed that Mary had to stay working in the mill and not follow her dreams.
- So, this song is about recognising Mary's dreams if not their fulfilment.

## ***THE TRAGEDY OF LOW MOOR***

### **Verse 1**

A normal Monday in Low Moor, well normal, but the world's at war  
A sunny August day, sky blue and bright

The Low Moor Chemical Company, now a Government factory  
The carpet weavers all making Lyddite

Now known as factory one-eighty-two, it was the work they had to do  
To make the shells all needed for the Somme

### **Verse 2**

James Broughton heard a sizzling sound, a drum blew, threw him to the ground  
The packing shed caught fire, they felt the heat

Like cannon fodder to the fight, brave firemen rushed to fire-fight  
They came from Odsal and from Nelson Street

The war was raging miles away, but war came to Low Moor that day  
The cost of war in Low Moor all too clear

### **Chorus**

The futility of war, the tragedy of Low Moor  
Forty lives, but did they ever count the same?  
The futility of war, the tragedy of Low Moor  
In years from now, will we still know their names?

### **Verse 3**

Scott and Forbes, they led the charge, the new Hayhurst they did discharge  
John Majerus crawled in, the man from Wike

At 3:16, the whole thing blew, a never ending fireball grew  
Parts of Hayhurst fell at Heckmondwike

The gas holder was torn and fell, transforming Low Moor into hell  
Some heard the blast a hundred miles away

### **Chorus**

The futility of war, the tragedy of Low Moor  
Forty lives, but did they ever count the same?  
The futility of war, the tragedy of Low Moor  
In years from now will we still know their names?

**Verse 4**

It took four days to find them all, forty in the last roll call  
The final one, from Kent, was Tom Woodfine

They didn't want the news to spread, of all the tragic Low Moor dead  
Who died in accident 379

They only knew the Hayhurst dead, from the numbers on axe heads  
John Majerus he died at home that night

**Chorus**

The futility of war, the tragedy of Low Moor  
Forty lives, but did they ever count the same?  
The futility of war, the tragedy of Low Moor  
So in years from now will we?  
Yes, in years from now will we?  
In years from now, will we still know their names?

*Words & music Greg Mulholland, © Greg Mulholland 2025  
Written for Topic Folk Club 'Songs with a Bradford Accent' 2025*

## WORKSHOP SONGS

A song writing workshop was held at Bradford Mechanics Library on 31<sup>st</sup> May, led by Michelle Plum and Nick Hall. The following songs, not all with a Bradford focus, were either “polished” by a group led by Michelle; or created at the workshop by a group led by Nick.

Joy Leach

### **BUS CAMPAIGNING SONG**

*to the tune of Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush*

#### *Intro*

1. Don't you think it'd be just fine,  
Be just fine  
Be just fine  
Don't you think it'd be just fine if  
Bradford's buses arrived on time?
2. Don't you think it'd be just great  
Be just great  
Be just great  
Don't you think it'd be just great  
If passengers never had to risk being late?  
*(for work, school, appointments, secret assignments etc.)*
3. Don't you think it would be just grand  
Be just grand  
Be just grand  
Don't you think it would be just grand if  
Buses weren't cancelled 'out of hand'?
4. Don't you think it would make more sense  
Make more sense  
Make more sense  
Don't you think it would make more sense  
If departure times weren't all different?  
*(ref 680 bus Interchange to BRI & Bingley 9am – 7pm Mon to Sat)*
5. How long would you be willing to wait  
Willing to wait  
Willing to wait  
How long would you be willing to wait  
If your cab (or car or chauffeur driven limo)  
was cancelled, or unreasonably late?

6. Don't you think it'd be just & right  
Just & right  
Just & right  
Don't you think it'd be just & right  
If we could send in our views without a fight?
7. Wouldn't it be a wondrous gain  
A wondrous gain  
A wondrous gain  
Wouldn't it be a wondrous gain  
If passengers had no need to complain?
8. So don't you think it would be just fine,  
Be just fine  
Be just fine?  
Don't you think it would be just fine if  
Bradford's buses arrived on time??

OPTIONAL ENDINGS: either a Reprise of the 1<sup>st</sup> verse of *Here we go round the Mulberry Bush*  
or *The Wheels on the Bus Sometimes Go Around*

Phil Bruce

**POEM ABOUT BRADFORD**

*Performed with musical accompaniment from other workshop participants*

The passion  
The glory  
The hidden story      (x2)

An outsider  
A stranger  
To this hallowed town  
An impression of a city with  
A massive frown

The beauty  
The gems  
The mystery  
In this mayhem  
The moment  
The stories  
The hidden glories

What keeps me here  
The connection  
The romance  
The joys of the  
Rhythms of a Bollywood dance

The passion  
The glory  
The hidden story      (x3)

***A SONG ABOUT DAVE ROBINSON***

My mate Dave is a Bradford Lad  
Rest assured he is never sad  
He's the man with the guitar  
Walks the cobbled streets of Yorkshire  
Going from pub to pub and bar to bar  
Ready at the drop of a hat  
To play his fine guitar

Humble Dave weaving through the crowds  
Doing his thing always has a good sing  
We'll all be singing soon  
With our Dave in the room  
When once he was a little boy  
A song was his only toy  
Now that he's tall and strong  
His song goes on and on

Sing hey ho 1 2 3 my man Dave is singing with me  
Sing hey ho 1 2 3 what a delight my mate Dave sings with all his might

## ***CUSTODIANS***

*Chorus:*

*Custodian of these lands*

*(we are) custodians of these lands*

*Creating beauty by the work of our hands*

Settlers from another time and place

I don't know their name but i recognise their face

Carried by the wind or dropped from a beak

They soothe my soul; and to my heart they speak

*Chorus*

My garden is peopled with flowers I have grown

And with plants I've been given by people I have known

People who are long gone and friends who are new

Plants that didn't take but many that grew

*Chorus*

But I am only a custodian passing through

(D)

## ***SONG IN HONOUR OF CAROLINE WILLIAMS***

*Chorus:*

*Fighting fire for higher ground*

*Fighting fire with the magic of sound*

*Preserving space for the home that's found*

*Fighting fire for higher ground*

Silsden sings and freedom rings

To spare a patch of ground

No cupboards bare we have to share

In recipes we've bound

*Chorus*

Where wild flowers sway and the horses graze

And the wind blows quiet through the trees

On Keighley ground the peace is found

Down by the crystal clear stream

*Chorus*

Chemicals too close to the playground

Too close to the homes

Smoke floods the clouds up above

From grassroots and seeds to meet all our needs

Campaign of compassion and love

There'll be a storm in a teacup  
If when Polly puts the kettle on before seven  
Cheese in the freezer, two bags, yellow tags  
Argue the toss about heaven  
Come here come home to the edge of the boar  
And bring me the banger back from Low Moor  
Pickled eggs in the cellar a thousand more in the  
At the foot of our stairs, there's someone who cares  
But you'd best be in bed by eleven  
Grey ham and pickled eggs layed out in a spread  
Ten thousand jars in the cellar  
From the top of the hill to love apples on the sill  
We welcome you home weary walker  
Come here come home to the edge of the boar  
Bring me the banger back from Low Moor  
Pack up or pack it in, no biscuits in the tin  
It's the end of this story, tell her

## ***PARACHUTE GAME***

*A song in memory of Muppett*

When I first laid my eyes on Muppett  
He was in charge of the parachute game  
He led from the back on the walks that he mapped  
And everyone knew his name  
He was honest and friendly, tender and kind  
Words like atoms flowed from his mind  
Whatever the challenge he'd always deliver  
Etched in his books as he walked by the river

From Bradford to Keighley, From Saltaire to Shipley,  
an old Cnet bag in his hand, the host with the most  
he traversed coast to coast, a magical one man band