

*Rhyming  
Away My Time*

**John Henderson**  
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## **Jake Hinnerson's Shadow**

Jake Hinnerson's rear-end was hard, I've heard.  
Fifty times harder than flint.  
It wore out his 'breeks' as he walked or sat down,  
For it followed him wherever he went.

Jake Hinnerson went out to live in the Med.,  
'Neath the tropical sun there so kind.  
And when he'd made his way to the beach or the hills,  
His rear-end it followed behind.

If Jake Hinnerson stayed out quite late some nights,  
And it was hard to get home in the dark.  
Then he'd strike his rear-end with a sharp iron rod,  
And light his way back by the spark.

Jake Hinnerson's kilt it was fire-proof I've heard,  
As you've guessed now it sure must have been.  
For his wild-on-fire kilt round his flinty rear-end,  
Was the most awesome sight ever seen.

Jake Hinnerson one summer flew high o'er the pond,  
To see all cold Alaska's wild sights.  
His rear-end so famous, of course tagged along,  
To bask in the Northern Lights.

The liner he sailed on the northern seas,  
Fell foul to the grip of the ice.  
But with Hinnerson's rear-end out cutting a swathe,  
The iced liner broke free in a trice.

Jake Hinnerson's rear-end was hard, mighty hard,  
But his heart was much softer and kind.  
One lesser than he might have resented this song,  
But I knew good Old Jake wouldn't mind.

## Lovely Jean

I saw her face within white roses,  
As a picture fresh and fair.  
And I could hear her as a song bird,  
Whose lilt sweetly filled the air.  
Sure no bonnier flow'r could ever have sprung,  
Near a river's edge, or wild woodlands green.  
Never a single bird has ever sung,  
As did my lovely Jean.

When we went out a-walking,  
Shyly holding hands,  
I was in seventh heaven,  
But making no demands.  
So we went on a-wand'ring,  
Till the evening shadows fell,  
O'er all our sweet conversing,  
And naught else?  
Well, do you expect me to tell!

## Sweet Winsome Lass

When I'm lonesome I picture her fair angel face,  
Her calm bearing, those welcoming eyes, ... and so wise,  
That aroused in my mind, so beguiled by such grace,  
A fond heart-felt int'rest that I could not disguise.  
These feelings so strong for a stranger from far,  
I'd ne'er ever thought would one day come to pass.  
But it happen'd that moment when I followed her star,  
And wishfully dreamt that she'd become my own lass.

This sweet winsome lass,  
No other could surpass.  
E'en I looked ev'rywhere,  
None would ever compare,

This sweet charming quine.  
No other was so fine.  
Bright star that she seemed to me,  
But alas not destined as mine.

Today this winsome lass,  
No other will e'er surpass.  
E'en I search ev'rywhere,  
None will ever compare,  
With this most charming lass.

A warm and caring pal,  
A chatty, and happy gal.  
A bright light still to me,  
And will thus ever be,  
One who once this lad enthralled.

## **Latter Day Loving**

I passed by today the flower shop, dear lass,  
And saw a vision clearly there;  
Of you while you made bouquets, dear lass,  
With your skilled hands, and your looks so fair.

The first time that I looked in your smouldering eyes,  
My heart had ne'er felt such a thrill.  
I vowed there and then that you would be mine,  
For ever both our lives to fulfil.

I know that I am showing my years now, dear lass;  
As my wit has less sparkle now than then,  
But while I can still write some love lines, dear lass,  
I'll sit musing of away back then, and to when,  
We had to elope one day from trouble at home  
And seek out the help Sisters give,  
To all such as us whose faiths sometimes blocked,  
The love union that we wished to live.

I love these old days you revive, dear lad,  
And I see all these visions anew,  
Of you while you delivered our fresh blooms, dear lad,  
With strong hands, and fine man good and true.  
I feel that the dear Lord certainly meant,  
That bonded together we'd ever stay,  
To do all that we've done, and thereby be content,  
In ev'ry conceivable way.

## **Retrospect and Prospect**

Our worlds were very different when we parted.  
Our future prospects lay in sep'rate ways,  
Which left each other close to where we had started,  
Though with fond memories of those pleasant days.

So many kindly words and repartee,  
Some hints from fond looks exchanged,  
To build a friendship everlasting,  
Though not predicting, if, when, or where arranged.

We know long parted years can ne'er return,  
And future days we cannot see.  
Yet deep within both our hearts and minds,  
Thrive strong roots of former empathy.

Lots old-time songs in harmony,  
They bring us closer, thee and me,  
Turn most our frowns to smiles and glee,  
And merry repartee.



## **The Ojai Valley Malbec**

When the sun shines out, o'er Ventura,  
And the Ojai Valley's vines.  
There the Malbec,  
Classic Malbec,  
Is a prince among all wines.

Taste the Malbec, full-bodied Malbec.  
Savour its aroma so sweet.  
Absorb Malbec, such splendid Malbec.  
Surely you'll find it a treat.  
No doubt it's unique.  
Yes truly unique!

You will find your pleasure growing.  
You will feel a rising glow.  
You may hear grape voices calling,  
As digestive juices flow.

God's full warmth spreads o'er Ventura,  
And its Ojai Valley's vines,  
Where the Malbec,  
Classic Malbec,  
Is a prince among all wines.

## Keo Beer

In a country where wild bougan-ville-ae grow,  
Throwing forth bright blooms that cascade high and low,  
There's an exile Scot who finds that life's a peach,  
As he soaks up the sun, the sea and golden beach.  
But when shadows stretch to fast bring on dark nights,  
He's then ready to seek out fresh delights.  
In a taverna where the beer is strong.  
On his way he sings this thirsty song .....

"KEO, you're the smoothest lager.  
Smoother than all other brews ... You  
Slip down as a draught so ice-cool.  
The fine taste you give proves I'm no fool.  
What would life be like without ye?  
Hear me as I sing true - Gee ....!  
KEO, you are my Cleo,  
And I'm your thirsty Antony."

## **Marion Braidfoot Wallace**

Heiress young Marion Braidfoot Wallace  
Loved William it is said,  
From the day in the Twelve Nineties,  
When love's darts to her him had led.

They soon were truly married,  
And vowed from then to be,  
Partners faithful, caring, loving,  
As dear Scotland, Will tried to free.

But the outlaw William Wallace,  
Found troubles crossed his path,  
As the English troops he'd ambushed,  
Incurred King Edward's loathesome wrath.

The outcomes of such anger,  
Were traps where e'er he'd be.  
The worst sprung one day in Lanark,  
When Will his wife came back to see.

'Twas its Sheriff true to Edward,  
Who raided the Wallace home.  
But forewarned by loyal comrades,  
Will by then had up and gone.

The Sheriff felt so cheated,  
That his response in all his ire,  
Was to murder Will's brave Marion,  
In their house as funeral pyre.

## **Ann's WEE-ME**

Ann's WEE-ME stands so humbly,  
Watching all who pass him there,  
On his shelf such a lovely, cuddly,  
Golden teddy-bear.

Some teddies seek the sunshine.  
WEE-ME never goes outside.  
Some teddies oft get restless,  
But WEE-ME guards with pride.

He's happy as a sentry,  
Never wearies standing tall.  
He cares for Ann and watches o'er  
All folks who come to call.

WEE-ME's quiet and pensive,  
Blind, deaf and dumb is he,  
Despite Annie often wishing,  
That he could talk or see.

She gives him hugs and tickles.  
She keeps him clean and dry.  
And when folk's come to dinner,  
He wears his red bow-tie.

When Annie writes a letter,  
He watches what's to do.  
He gives her inspiration,  
While her pen-end she will chew.

I'm sure he hates desk clutter,  
And dusting when it's done,  
Or polish on the surface,  
Which blinds him from the sun.

But as from Ann's old desk-top shelf.  
We've never heard complaint.  
No doubt one day he will become,  
The first TED-WEE-ME-SAINT.

## Renaissance Man

My poor hips they were aching.  
My big toes had the gout.  
My hearing was lots duller,  
And my voice had lost its clout.

My neck stiffened when in bed.  
No pillows put it right.  
I tried a rubber collar too,  
But couldn't stand it tight.

My sense of smell was useless.  
My tastebuds told me lies.  
Thus when I lost my appetite,  
It came as no surprise.

My sight kept failing daily.  
I found it hard to focus.  
The doctor called it 'Glaucoma',  
Or some such hocus-pokus.

My hair it just kept falling out.  
My nose a constant drip.  
No wonder that my wife oft said,  
'You're ready for the skip.'

I was no use to anyone,  
So hypochondriacal.  
Not least because I couldn't use,  
My aging 'block and tackle'!

Then suddenly ....

My old hips stopped their aching.  
My gout it went away.  
My ears and voice came back on song,  
But why, I couldn't say.

My neck no longer stiffened up.  
Its muscles quite OK.  
No need for rubber collars then,  
But why, I couldn't say.

My sense of smell got better.  
My taste buds told no lies.  
My appetite came back again.  
Another big surprise.

My sight got sharper daily,  
With no blurring in my eyes.  
The TV came through crystal clear.  
Perhaps the best surprise.

My hair restarted growing.  
My nose became bone-dry.  
I even had to shave again,  
Still often wondered why.

My ill-like moods just disappeared.  
I could gaily skip and jump.  
No wonder that my wife then smiled.  
When I smacked her on her rump.

My 'block and tackle' dare you ask  
Did it come back in play.  
Of course it did, with vigour!  
But why, I couldn't say.

\*\*\*\*\*

I feel a new-born athlete now,  
Not just a done old-stager.  
So what brought on this turn-about?  
You'll never guess, I wager.

What is that I hear you say,  
"A good dose of Viagra?"  
Wow!  
Nothing quite so drastic  
But,  
No lime now in my Lager!

## Marvel of Our Age

I wanted to be a good pianist,  
Who played rag time at pace,  
But just having eight small fingers,  
I never won that race.  
If I'd had ten good fingers,  
And not been born with eight,  
I might have tinkled ragtime music,  
At any called for rate.  
Yes, if I'd had two more digits,  
All ten could then have sped,  
Not fumbled and stumbled,  
Through pieces sorely bled.

I scratched my head,  
And then I said,

"What should I do  
To improve this situation?  
Pay some clever surgeon  
For a transplant operation  
To stitch two more digits  
Onto each of my hands?  
Or try to get rag fairies  
To wave their magic wands?"

I opted for the surgery,  
Drastic though it seemed,  
To merely play piano,  
As I had always dreamed.  
The additions I was given,  
Came so well to scale,  
It never even crossed my mind,  
These extra joints might fail.

My muscles and my tendons  
For weeks I stretched and flexed,  
Knowing only with such work-outs,  
Fast fing'ring might come next.

The results of my persistence,  
Are amazing, so I'm told.  
And the crispness of my ragging  
Is so wondrous to behold,  
That folks queue up for hours on end,  
Outside 'THE MONKEY CAGE'  
To pay to enter and admire,  
Me,  
THE MARVEL OF OUR AGE  
Who often hears it whispered,  
"That chimp would grace the stage."

### **Bonnie Bairnie**

Cam oan ma bonnie bairnie,  
Saft drap doon oan yer knees;  
Steek baith yer wachtie eenies,  
Clasp hans ticht gin ye please.  
Spak douce tae Gweed in hivven,  
He'll tirn his lugs tae ye;  
Spik weil o tentin kinfowk,  
Fa ye graun luv dis gie.

Fit anse is in yer myndin,  
Thit ye hiv deen the day?  
Syne gie Him muckle thenkyees,  
Thit fyow things gaed agley.  
Syne for yer ain wee sel noo,  
Fyles ye ging doon tae slep,  
Prig wi the bricht o' mornin,  
Ye've throw nicht been saff kep.



### **Belle and Bob**

Bob lad come over here by me,  
And hold me in your arms;  
Leave your cloud, float gently down,  
To sample all my charms.  
We'll waltz around the forest,  
Then spoon, just me and you;  
Join me with a loving heart,  
And pledge that you'll be true.

Belle lass I'll come to meet you,  
And sample all your charms.  
There's nothing better I would like,  
Than dancing in your arms.  
Spoonng blythely in the woods,  
Seems just OK by me;  
But if you want to capture this Bob's heart,  
First tell me, What's for tea?

## Fate

I wake to find o'er the valley spread  
Eerie whiteness like the dead.  
Great joy to some, others' deadly fate,  
Yet seems to purify the mortal state.

Near-by laden pines, needles clad in snow,  
Strangely soothing out a soft elusive glow.  
I wonder if a greater love than this there be,  
Given by whoever brings the light to me?

But what on second glance lies bare?  
A bird by yonder tree?  
O calm you wafts of swirling snow!  
O'er silenced robin at rest below!

I linger, ponder for a while,  
As o'er the corpse cold snow doth pile.  
My sad heart cursing nature's stings  
That cause such wintry sufferings .

Hark! Noisy shouts! Squeals' refrains  
Of children's voices ease my pains.  
Snow's delights are all they know.  
Not hidden victims still below.

But I in bitter sweet repose  
In moments such as those,  
Accept the good and bad my God can send,  
For even at last great pines before Him low must bend.

### **Show a Smiling Face**

Show a smiling face to the world.  
It's the finest thing known.  
Open up your heart and be glad.  
There's no point in your looking sad.  
Show your sparkling eyes clearly.  
People will smile back at you,  
And,  
Soon you will see,  
Yes they will always be,  
Bright and shiny eyed too.

A smile is something very, very special.  
So always bring one right up to the fore.  
It will cheer up most folks and quite easily,  
Make them a lot happier than before.

## Abandoned Banana

All were bananas, light green bananas,  
My brothers, sisters and poor me.  
Unripe bananas, but fine bananas,  
Who'd grown in bunches on a tree,  
Till we were all cut down last week,  
Piled up in a great big heap,  
Sold so cheap it made us weep.  
All soon were bought ....Except .... for me!

A real sad story, a real sad story,  
My brothers, sisters all away.  
I was so lonely, so very lonely,  
I cried as in that box I lay,  
Till a nice old lady as she passed near,  
Whispered kindly, 'Just you wipe that tear.  
I'll take you with me, and I'll not eat you.  
You'll be safe with me ... no fear?'

By that kind old lady I was maintained.  
Four legs, long ears and blue eyes gained,  
With clever knife-cuts and strong-thread stitch,  
She'd sewn me up without a hitch.  
She said,  
You're my precious young banana,  
You'll sit upon my grand-piano,  
So noble as an ornament.  
And there you'll be content.

You'll love that piano, your grand-piano,  
With its grandstand view from where you'll rest.  
You'll not be lonely, my one and only,  
Happy sweet banana guest,  
Who'll always smile when I sit near,  
Saying oft to me his voice so clear,  
This grateful feeble fruity foundling,  
Feels fostered life is quite astounding.

## Lorelei

You're enticing me, Lorelei.  
Your calls so enthrall, Lorelei.  
Oh to be with you, Lorelei,  
Far above these rocks on high.

I'll steer a course over to you, Lorelei.  
Sail my ship close by, Lorelei.  
There to fly to you, Lorelei,  
Far above these rocks on high.

Oh, come sweet sailor, come pledge your heart,  
All your life, to me.  
If it's so I swear that we'll both share in  
Such a love that sets us free.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm coming at your call, Lorelei,  
To clasp both hands with you, Lorelei.  
Hold you in my arms, Lorelei,  
Tightly on these cliffs so high.

Now nearly at these sheer cliffs, Lorelei.  
Guide me safely in, Lorelei.  
Past these sharp black rocks, Lorelei,  
That so menacingly lie.

Come on, sweet sailor through them all.  
Sail your ship in near by.  
When you do you'll be there with me, so  
Happily that you might just die!

I'm reaching from the bow, Lorelei,  
To kiss you on the lips, Lorelei.  
Then hold that sure embrace, Lorelei,  
Until on these rocks, we'll lie.

But what noise is that I hear, Lorelei.  
My ship has founder'd here, Lorelei.  
I'm sinking fast from you, Lorelei,  
Who did say that I might just die!

### **The Muted Mermaid's Misery**

My heart soared at your voice,  
Like oceans' swell steep a-risen,  
From deep forces' growing powers.  
It brought great joy; oh! such joy!

My heart sank in the troughs,  
When our silent separations,  
Forbade fond looks, close embraces.  
So much sadness; such sadness!

But, oh my only love,  
My lost tongue it hides truth.  
You still rest unaware,  
'Twas me bore you afloat,  
In foul tempest's deathly hour.

Let your voice speak true,  
To me your faithful muted mermaid.  
Though not to be mine,  
Repeat as precious consolation,  
Beguiling words of yore,  
Endearments I implore.  
Not conscious of my longing,  
Soothe soft my trembling heartbeats,  
Now,  
If not for evermore.

### **The Inveet**

Cam 'wa ow'r tae ma hoose,  
Sich pleasure it wull be,  
Tae shaw ye ma pianny,  
An the meesic it can gie.  
Gin ye dinna troo me,  
Ye maun cam ow'r an see .....

Ma braw pianny poors oot  
Graun meesic ilka day,  
Its honky-tonkyin teens,  
Shair fesh up glamourie.  
Gin ye dinna troo me,  
Ye maun cam ow'r an see .....

Fan fingers tap the keys  
Tae tinkle faist rag teens,  
E'en angels hich abune,  
Maun dince, anse jimp aroon.

Fit! Ye dinna troo me?  
Ach! Weil! Dearie-me!  
Ye'll hivtae ging atheen  
An hae a wee luik-see!

### **Join Me in The Highlands**

Join me in wintry Scotland,  
With all its sleet and snow.  
Wear a warm kilt and jerkin,  
Shut out the snell winds that blow.  
Come with well-worn boots on,  
Ready to face come what may,  
While there in those highlands,  
Mountains and moorlands,  
Striding out strongly each day.

From blustery treks in foul weather,  
Soaked through to the skin we will be,  
Till dried by warm fires in each bothy,  
And revived too from hot mugs of tea.  
Then wrapped in our blankets and mem'ries,  
We'll blether till candlelight wanes.  
Then drift to our dreamlands,  
There safe in our Highlands.  
No worries, no fears and no pains!



## **Rural Bliss in Scotland**

Each village where I've sometime stayed,  
O'er these last sixty years,  
Call up their own strong memories,  
Of many joys and tears.

Folks' homes, folks' shops,  
Folks' kirks, folks' schools,  
Folks' gardens, all in bloom,  
That clearly showed their intentions  
To banish doom and gloom.

For it was tough, in these war days,  
To earn more than a crust,  
From long hours that most had to toil,  
In field or quarry dust.

But for us youngsters unaware,  
Such Scottish life was bliss,  
As not expecting much from it,  
So little seemed amiss.

### **Tale Out of School**

Mrs Macdonald stormed up to the school.  
Her brow it was furrowed, her looks could have killed.  
She knocked the room door of the master so hard,  
It left little doubt that she'd well marked his card.  
Quoth she,  
"We baith ken thit ma Jessie is nae scented rose,  
An' aye tae be shair she aft baithers yin's nose.  
Bit shair, thon is nae jist whit teachers are fur.  
Sae lairn oor wee Jessie, an' stoap smellin' her."

## **The Village Cemetery Inspector's False Teeth**

Grave-digging is never easy  
With hoar-frost on the ground,  
But Muir, the inspector ignored this,  
As he lingered nearby on the mound.

When his workers neck-deep in the opening,  
Shouted, "It's just about right, Mister Muir",  
The inspector got out his tape measure,  
And edged near the head to make sure.

But just as he leant down to test it,  
Ma Nature, she iced his left boot,  
So head over heels he soon tumbled,  
Right down the slippy brown chute.

The workers heard scrambling down under,  
So lent o'er the side for a peek.  
"I've lost my new false-teeth, Muir shouted,  
And they're playin' at hide-an'-go-seek."

In due course a hand holding something,  
Rose valiantly up into sight.  
So his men hauled him out of the chasm,  
As another hand held onto them tight.

When out Muir said to his 'treasure',  
"You'll be fine with a rub and a spit."  
But when placed in his mouth moments later,  
It was clear what he'd found did not fit!

### **Armadale Beach, Isle of Skye**

We lurched off the ferry from Mallaig,  
Our land-legs and rucksacks all tilted,  
But struck out for sea-side attractions,  
And a dip ere the low sun had wilted.

First sight of the bay was quite daunting,  
More sand than cold water in reach,  
And scattered all over its surface,  
Huge dishes there littered the beach.

"Baby UFOs from Mars", quipped ma partner.  
We'll skirt them and go for our swim."  
"No fear, said I, less enchanted,  
Let's just take a look closer in."

The 'space-crafts' seemed coated in jelly,  
Changed shape when washed by the tide,  
Not even a paddle was ventured,  
Our detour that followed was wide !

### **Each Morning**

Nothing more designed to chill,  
Was Winter time at Jordanhill,  
Each morning.

Roy was there to meet us and,  
He seldom failed to greet us there,  
Each morning.

Then with so much keen-ness,  
Through the old gym door,  
He smiled out, the orders,  
We longed to hear no more.

BUT,

Nothing more designed to bore,  
Was running round and round the floor,  
Each morning.

Nothing made us sicker,  
As it over-dosed the ticker there,  
Each morning.

Round and round and round and round,  
We had to go.

Hop ... skip ...,  
Then walk and so,  
It became monotonous,  
For whole darn lot of us,  
Each morning.

## Our Little Ones

We sat and watched our little ones,  
There playing on our lawn.  
That now strikes chords in memory.  
Of days so long, long gone.

I see again our very own,  
As they romped round carefree,  
Though life is counted year on year,  
Seems yesterday to me.

I think how full our days were then,  
With heartaches and great joys,  
And how almost all of these,  
Concerned our lass and boys.

At times I've wondered who shaped who,  
But always it's been plain,  
Such open love, such simple faith,  
Was everybody's gain.

As these our children grew and bloomed,  
Time then just seemed to fly,  
Until the day they left our sides,  
Themselves the world to try.

We pictured how they'd make their way,  
We watched and worried some,  
About their daily doings,  
And what they might become.

They had some ups and downs en route,  
To being more mature,  
But duly forged the happiness,  
Of fam'ly lives secure.

Now we admire their babes at play,  
Their make believe and ploys.  
Just as we were then so proud,  
Of our fine girl and boys.

They too can watch their little ones,  
Playing on their lawn.  
And recall these happy moments,  
When these dear ones move on.

They too must wonder how they'll fare,  
As we did one by one.  
Hoping too, in days ahead,  
For joy from what they've done.

## God's Will

I know lots of living family folk,  
Though most are out of sight,  
Except across the e-highways.  
But meet one day we might,  
Bringing touch so sure to bridge,  
The gulf of parted years,  
Of unknown kinship, blood dispersed,  
And all past joys and tears.

It's said that fate will always bring,  
Both chances good and ill.  
But I am certain in due time,  
We'll meet ... if it's God's will.

Please don't neglect me,  
Then forget me.  
I hold you all so dear.  
Let's keep chatting,  
Smiling, laughing,  
Right throughout the year.

Remember too that fate may bring,  
Both chances good and ill.  
But I am certain in due time,  
We'll touch ... if it's God's will.

## True Friendship

A marvellous place was old Tivoli,  
Gardens I've oft recalled.  
The wonders viewed in Tivoli,  
Such novelties enthralled.

I was a young wanderer in those days,  
And so-many a sight did I see.  
But now while I dream  
Few visions e'er seem,  
As fine as Tivoli.

The comforts of our grand hostel there,  
Is something I also recall.  
The food was good, the company great,  
'Mongst mem'ries that ne'er will pall.

We could borrow a bike from its back-yard,  
And pedal off fast and free,  
To reach the coast, our backs to toast,  
'Fore diving in the sea.

A good swimming place that Klampenburg,  
Its warm beach we daily adorned.  
The burgers sold in its small kiosk ..  
...With mustard, never scorned.

Tho' being a shy laddie in those days,  
Still so-many fine pals I made there.  
But it must be said, one special friend,  
I took-to beyond compare.

I oft walked on that hostel's lawn,  
All kilted, blithe an' fair.  
Hoping, as strolling, and wishfully willing,  
That fair lass to join me there.

Our roots we learned were oceans apart.  
Her home city, Aberdeen.  
No, not my Scottish granite one,  
But a very different scene.

South-west Seattle is where her town,  
Is washed by Puget Sound.  
Though 'brief encounter' it had to be,  
We sure found common ground.



Reluctant parting came too soon,  
As she to Sweden went,  
Without a mention that she had,  
Another planned intent.

Weeks later when trav'ling on her way,  
To see the Em'rald Isle,  
She diverted via Stirling town,  
At which I had to smile.

But first to our old Aberdeen,  
She made the journey long,  
Though our phone thereafter soon did ring,  
Don't get her motives wrong.

She stayed two nights,  
My mum approved,  
While dad he said "Och ay!"  
"Our laddie John picks bonnie ones,  
But surely he'll not fly,  
To all the ends of earth for her,  
Oh my! Oh my! Oh my!"

The friendship stayed platonic,  
No more, no less than this.  
With no moves ever ventured,  
To steal a hug or kiss.

That is why now four score on,  
Of years going sep'rate ways,  
Our rapport is still as friendly,  
As twas in those fond days.

Our relationship is special,  
Though mostly out of sight,  
Save chatting o'er the e-highways.  
But, meet up once more we might.

The world is smaller now to bridge,  
Such gulfs of parted time.  
Meanwhile we share our mutual joys,  
In music, prose and rhyme.

## Coffee, Cheese and Chives ...Not Wise!

A carousel whirls fast around, and on and on ... no interlude.  
    Buzzes in my head so much, does very little good.  
A calliope hard drives it on, with fuel of cheese and chives  
    Charged with bed-time coffee, a time-bomb in disguise.

It's one o'clock in the morning now, the engine's gath'ring power.  
    Whipping up its horses at a hundred miles per hour.  
    If I call for showman boss, he'll maybe pull all plugs,  
To let my braincells take a break and sleep like bugs in rugs.

    Carousel's still spinning round, and on and on it goes,  
Roaring in my head much worse, no chance of sweet repose.  
    Still calliope it drives it on, supercharged by chives  
Laced with cups of coffee, which may have been unwise?

It's two o'clock in the morning now, its engine's gath'ring power.  
    Twirls it on its crazy way at two hundred miles per hour.  
    If I call again, 'Showman boss, Please pull out the plugs,  
And let my braincells take a break and sleep like bugs in rugs. '

Then suddenly I hear a voice sharp screeching in my ear.  
    Sounds like wife's rising rage is reaching second gear.  
        'Waken up you stupid man,  
        Dreaming you have been.  
        Pull yourself together fast,  
        Before I make a scene.  
        Idiotic scoffing chives,  
        And cheese too by the ton,  
Wash'd well down with coffees ...  
        Daft!  
        Much better having none.'

I learned my lesson well that night to sidestep nightmares wild,  
    Cooling braincell's cantrips with water night-caps mild.  
    No carousel for them to use, calliope without power.  
    Chariots swinging gently ... at zero miles per hour.

## **Thunder and Lightning**

Once the skies start dark'ning black,  
As long November nights come back,  
This hints to wise folk out in Cyprus,  
'Quick! Tie up that sunshine mattress.'  
For right soon sharp gusty showers,  
Will come to ruffle autumn flowers.  
E'en all the rolled-up parasols,  
Will fly up and over garden walls.  
Then the well known lightning bright,  
With loudly thundering claps all night,  
Make thoughts of some deep sleep wishful,  
Far less hot tea drunk by the dishful.  
All stay dozey, all's not rosy,  
Downie swaddling tight and cosy,  
Hope floods won't invade the house,  
Causing more than minor grouse.  
Flash and rumble,  
Make pets grumble..  
Fruit from trees,  
Fast they tumble,  
Fall in muds,  
Spoil in floods.  
Roads are streams that racing run,  
Without drains to take their turn,  
To halt the spree,  
Down to the sea,  
'Fore morn brings,  
Zephyrs like the Spring's.

## Twa Chiels

Kirk wis stannin seelent  
I' the caaldrife evenin airs,  
Fan Beadle an Tam Tamson cam,  
Tae mak thur needit prayers.  
Beadle teuk his ain steel,  
Faur wyes doon the frint,  
Fyle Tamson creepit in,  
An bided weil ahint.

The Beadle spiks ....

"Noo a am rarely faithfu,  
As Ye dae shairly ken?  
Think ye Gweed thit a am  
Nae lik a ither men,  
Wha nab, an chait, an brak yer laws,  
An tak Yer name in vain.  
Ma ainly thocht's tae weil ser Ye,  
Wi a ma nicht an mane.

A aye tak up the off'rin,  
I' the Sunday mornin tray.  
A nivver miss a service,  
An Ye ken hoo weil a pray.  
Ye ken a dinna gam'le,  
An a dinna sup a lot.  
An a hivna daff'd wi weemen  
Seen laist time a wis caught!

A ken the Bible's screevins,  
An a tirm ow'r fit they state,  
About keppin the commandments  
Lik fowks fa fin guid gate.  
Think Ye Gweed fer makin me,  
Ain o Yer chysen fyow;  
An upright pillar o Yer kirk,  
Troo Christian throw an throw."

\*\*

Tam Tamson syne bood slaa his heid  
An knelt doon oan yin knee,  
"Gweed a ask Yer mercy  
Oan sich sinner maan lik me.  
A ken it's been a whilie,  
Seen a veesited yer hoose;  
Nabbin syne plate's sillar,  
Tae spen it a oan booze.

Ma waikness fer guid ale,  
Is wicket Gweed a ken,  
An fyles a gie an antrin sweer,  
An stail an orra hen.  
An ither things a canna mynd,  
Bit shair Ye'll ken them tee.  
Forgie me ma richt fell mistaks.  
Hae mercy please oan me.  
Fur a the coorse things thit a dae,  
An fit puckle a maun gie,  
O Gweed a ask Yer leenity  
Oan roch sinner loon lik me.  
A maun impruv ma haibits,  
Bit thon wull shair be teuch.  
An fan a mak ma laist accoont,  
A'll jist hiv tae howp a've deen eneugh.

\*\*

Guid Gweed fan luikin ow'r,  
Wi laachter at Tam loon,  
Slaa apened hivven's beukie,  
An screeved his name nait doon.

## Gargunnoch Village

Yonder's my Gargunnoch,  
Beneath its waterfall.  
Memories of it will never pall.  
Lived there very cosy,  
Close on thirty years.  
Saw my share of joys and tears.

In that little village,  
With its hills and burns,  
So peaceful in the morning,  
And as evening turns.  
Wander there with me,  
Up and down its brae.  
There to greet my neighbours,  
And pass the time of day.

Go round to its only shop.  
In its window gaze.  
Then buy all the provisions,  
You'll need for next few days.  
Chat for sometime there,  
Banter can be rare,  
In this little village,  
So restful to the mind.  
Utter contentment, you'll find.

Go into its rural school.  
Worship in its kirk.  
See its children learning there,  
No duties e'er to shirk.  
Watch them as they grow,  
Reaping what we sow.  
In Gargunnoch Village,  
A peaceful life and slow.  
Restful and fulfilling ... I know!

## St. Cyrus Bay

A sunny day beach,  
A play and work beach,  
Its salmon net poles,  
Stood come what may.  
From sunrise faint glow,  
The fishers busy,  
Beneath steep cliffs,  
St. Cyrus Bay.

It was our babes' beach  
A go some days' beach,  
If rare sunshine,  
Came our way.  
Just a stone's throw,  
From our old schoolhouse,  
Along to steep cliffs,  
St. Cyrus Bay.

Apart our oldest,  
Babes barely walked then,  
But spades and pails,  
All used well there.  
Though coming back up,  
That sandy cliffside,  
Took sore carries,  
For toddling pair.

Nothing good comes without effort,  
And this was true where that beach lay.  
But all the fun of dipping, splashing,  
Worthwhile made St Cyrus Bay.  
Fond visions oft re-vive these beach days,  
Like shallow rock-pools where we'd play  
But that long climb was a struggle,  
Up and out St. Cyrus Bay.

## Match Box Toys

All bairns of auld 'Jock Tamson'  
With wishes are on ransom,  
Some right, some wrong, most kids find out.  
But is it worth their living,  
If by dreams they're not driven?  
My answer's not in doubt!

Our kids had some wishes,  
But not for tame goldfishes,  
That wouldn't make much noise.  
So while Evan got a budgie,  
And lass Lindsay got a kitten,  
Kerr gather'd Match Box toys.

The budgie was called 'Buster',  
And he'd fairly go his duster,  
Chirping, 'Come on Celtic',  
'Pretty, pretty, bhoys.'  
While wee 'Amber' was the kitten,  
Who soon had us quite smitten,  
Kerr gather'd Match Box toys.

Our teenies they had wishes,  
But still not for tame goldfishes.  
They just could not rest at that.  
So while Evan bought a guitar,  
Lass Lindsay got a fiddle, and  
Kerr loved his cricket bat.

Bold Evan formed a pop group,  
As lass Lindsay did much practice,  
Till their strumming and fine bowing,  
Made less 'noise'.  
While straight-batting Kerr desir-ed,  
Came much to be admir-ed,  
Well away from Match Box toys.

These bairns of auld 'Jock Tamson',  
With wishes were on ransom,  
Most right, few wrong, they sure found out.  
Learning of much worthy living,  
When by dreams one's most driven.  
Great wisdom, without doubt!



## Trusty Old Poppy

'Not the Poppy this morn,  
Says my sidekick, forlorn,  
That fat canvas canoe.  
Sunk in her belly,  
Stuck you and me.  
Long stretch with paddles  
To just reach the sea.  
Skim us way down,  
Loch Long in this rain  
Turn us in Loch Goil,  
To head home again.'  
'We'll splish an' we'll splosh.  
Make slow headway, I'd say,  
Might see basking sharks,  
Probably O.K..  
But best no fishing lines,  
Trailed out today,  
From this old canvas canoe.'  
'Worse luck, Poppy today,  
Says me grumpily,  
Most awkward but stable fat tank.  
She'll skin all our elbows,  
Make blisters that weep.  
A most awkward craft,  
For skimming the deep.  
But let's underway,  
With no further delay,  
To reach Carrick Castle,  
In this bitch come what may.'  
'Let's launch all trimmed fine,  
Sitting high o'er the brine.  
No fishing we'll do,  
Just in case it we'll rue.  
Yes, definitely taboo,  
From this clumsy canoe.'  
'We've had Poppy all day',  
Moans me, peevishly.  
Elbows skinned bare.  
Though weather stayed fair.  
Too awkward wide keel,  
To relax a great deal.  
But sharks seen steered clear,  
Causing no fear,  
Afloat there in Poppy,  
Who never got stroppy.  
No hint of capsized,  
Nor other surprise.  
Made Loch Goil on song,  
Safely back then up Loch Long.  
Us tired through and through,  
In fat, .... trusty canoe.

## Mother Nature's Calliopes

Precocious Earth's a carousel with chariots that do not stop,  
Revolving, spinning, kept on living by solar driven calliope,  
That steams right on perpetually, with a voice that seems to say,  
'My engine running, lets human beings, eat and work and play.'

Earth's a perverse planet oft, that tries so hard but once each year,  
To draw a neat ecliptic arc as a line so sharp and clear.  
Some wish that its inhabitants, on all its lands and sea,  
Were just as fine and fussy folks as moon and stars they be.

Such a mav'rick carousel it spins full circle once a day.  
Sun looks on in merriment, and this what it seems to say,  
'See these folks all twirling there, so many far miles out in space  
If I should change their gravity, they'd bounce all o'er the place.'

But how Sun acts is tightly ruled by Mother Nature ev'ry day.  
'Obey my orders', is what she says, 'and don't think too much on the way.'  
'There's enough of that far down below, inventing trouble, causing strife,  
Just leave them be, its up to me, to act the pow'rful wife.  
So keep a steady planet there, and then so calmly once each year,  
Help it paint a tidy arc on constant lines and clear.  
Not much chance inhabitants on all its land, its air, its sea,  
Will become such trusty folks to me as moon and stars are certainly.'

## **Emigration**

Little of Scotland gives ease!  
Forces me seek grasses much browner.  
Nothing in the ways it deals with me,  
Makes me want to stay home now.  
I know I must go far away now.  
This cold land just makes me shiver.

Little in this land gives great warmth!  
Forces me seek islands in bright sunlight.  
Nothing in the way rain pours down here,  
Makes me want to stay home now.  
I know I must go far away now.  
This old land just makes me shudder.

You ask me, "Will life be good?"  
I don't know, I don't know.  
But you'll hear from me, now and then.  
Then you might know,  
Yes, I'll let you know.

## SULA

Sula she taps the tows fowk's hairts lik oors,  
Fan nar tae us she hauds us i' her pooers.  
We ken nae leuks thit ither dugs hiv gien,  
Sich as thon sheen oot o' braw Sula's een.

She keps us saff, frae sherpness i' her lugs,  
An' she's aye waarm an' thenkfu tae oor hugs.  
Nae dug o' oors e'er shaw'd sich tentin teen,  
Lik divs gleg Sula, aipple o' oor een.

Dool days nicht cam syne tae oor veelage hoose,  
Makin a' oor hairts bide onythin' bit douce.  
Fyle thon weers oan an' dairk shaddas they maun fa',  
Sula bides a blessin, sich graun easedom tae us a'.

## **Fetching Milk from Murchie's Farm**

Banknock in the 40s,  
When we were living there,  
Got us into many scrapes,  
Like this one you can share.

After school we ran a race,  
To smelly farm at quite a pace.  
Jacket on, scarf round face,  
Clothes-pegs handy just in case,  
The cows had shat all o'er the place.

To get there first we knew to do,  
Not to finish back of queue,  
Midst byre's stink like last week's stew.

Cans got just three-quarters filled,  
Less likely to be tipped, then spilled.

But none the less we weren't aloof,  
From swinging cans to get some proof,  
Centrifugal force is honest truth.  
Till milk alit on passing roof,  
Soaking all nearby forsooth.

When rest of it went down the drain.  
Stiff milkfree porridge was our pain.

Grin and bear it was sole way,  
To quickly learn that we must pay,  
For stupid games we'd dared to play.

### **Dotty Doggereling**

If you are fond of doggerels,  
Fancy those that cast their spells,  
To rag-time that oft swells,  
O'er rhyme that always gels,  
Most words each tale tells,  
... Come join old Dogg' rel Jake.  
Taste his pattering poetry cake.  
Stanzabout just for a hoot,  
With a piano, not a flute.  
Go up and down the keys,  
Like educated fleas,  
With contrapuntal ease.

Jake aims to make laugh-ins,  
With his controversial whims.  
Like crazy scansion craft-ins,  
With tetrametric flute-rins.

Thus when you've been with old Jake,  
And some doggerels coaxed to 'bake',  
You'll have become about as astute,  
As an educated newt,  
That cannot play a ....  
Will not ever play a ....  
Doggerelin' tootlin' flute!

## **Grow, Bloom, Fade, Perish.**

Re-born daffodils in the Springtime,  
Endure ling'ring labour's morn,  
To share with fresh growth in each cluster,  
The cold light of winter's drear forlorn.  
Green stalks amidst leaves reach for sunshine,  
Through snowstorm or icy ground.  
Yet despite such delays to their journey and goal,  
Proud yellow blooms in arrays abound.

Their finely,  
Shaped trumpets,  
Standing serenely,  
In tinted hues.  
Blessed there in swards,  
Washed by God-sent,  
Morning's dews.  
Whisper,  
"Begone all you wearying and wintry blues."

We praise,  
Their splendour.  
We curse,  
Gales' risings,  
That spoil Nature's gift,  
Of such freshness that's new.  
We cut,  
We gather,  
Bright blooms,  
Adorning,  
Where they'll give such pleasure,  
To all whom they view.

Those fine daffodils we're soon mourning,  
Before many suns have set.  
They fade with the coming of summer,  
Whose warm days help us all them forget.

So remember them fondly each Springtime.  
Their uplift that makes spirits soar,  
From out of the dark depths of winter's harsh reign,  
To good times that lie in earth's store.

Enjoy daffodils in the Springtime.  
Take heart from their brief but bright span.  
Follow closely their precepts and examples,  
To always give pleasure as best as you can.

Recall all their glorious moments,  
As proudly they faced their fate,  
To grow, blossom, wither and perish like us,  
In our world ... an ephemeral state.

### **Final Voyage**

My love's ship went away o'er a year come May  
To endure all the sea holds in store;  
And each day I have prayed he would return,  
Never to roam evermore.

I've heard strains of his voice o'er the wild ocean's roars.  
What he sang was sweet music to me.  
Now I stand near the quay with fond hopes in my heart,  
My love's own ship I will soon see.

My lover's face I have sighted, his strong hands at the helm,  
As his ship slowly drifts to the shore;  
And I thank the good Lord who has returned him to me,  
His last voyage now in all safety o'er.



## **Kiss, Cuddle and Scoot**

When I was a school lad with a glint in my eye,  
Though being quite innocent, ever so shy,  
I found,  
That when any nice lass a bit of int'rest showed she,  
All such little hints soon stole caution from me.

First it was a Mary, and then came a Mirabelle.  
A Sue, and next a Sheila, and then a Sal as well.  
Such kiss-and-cuddle taking did not often last too long,  
For dire flirtatious habits were ingrained in me too strong.

When I was at college with a gleam in my eye,  
Then, not so innocent, and much less shy,  
I found,  
Quite a few cute ladies who with their charms me would lure,  
Any hope those then my flirting just might cure?

First it was a Ina, and then came an Isabel.  
A Pam, and next a Penny, and then a Pat as well,  
Such kiss-and-cuddle taking did not either last too long,  
For my dire flirtatious habits still remained with me too strong.

When I was a worker and a bachelor still,  
And oft on a search for, what could me thrill,  
I saw,  
Dangers pursuing, the same ways as before,  
As most of my fancies all wanted so much more.

First it was a Nelly who soon made me run away.  
A Jean, and then a Jenny, with whom I dared not stay.  
Such dangerous liaisons could never last for long,  
For my fear of loss of liberty remained with me too strong.

## Hearken Weil

Frae dairk o' nicht,  
Cam Gweed's bricht licht,  
Thit brocht life's spurt,  
Syne a muckle sturt,  
Fan a' focht, an' pran'd;  
Tae tak pooer i' ilka lan.

Noos warl o' dool,  
Weird we maun thole,  
Fyle aye howpin wi',  
Gweed's leenity,  
Airth wull kep its licht,  
An nae tirn aince mair bleck nicht!

Hearken tae me!  
Hearken tae me!  
Tak tent oor airth,  
Oar seen we'll a dee!

## **Fruit 'n Nut-case**

I'm a Choc'late Fruit and Nut-Case.  
Pop them in my mouth with great haste.  
Much enjoy their flavour,  
As their crunch I savour.  
Nothing more I favour.  
In that I won't waver.

I'm a Choc'late Fruit and Nut-Case  
I just smack my lips, with no haste  
Ruminate with pleasure.  
Repeat the dose at leisure.  
Thinking what a treasure.  
Ecstasy beyond measure.

I'm a Choc'late Fruit and Nut-Case.  
I just lick my chops with no haste.  
Digesting them is easy.  
Makes me bright and breezy.  
Ready ....for..... more

So on and on and on and on,  
I chew and chew and chew and chew.  
I munch and crunch and crunch and munch,  
Until a whole box load I soon get through.

## **Waxing Lyrical**

Honky-tonk pianos,  
Roll back the years,  
Stir up old mem'ries,  
Of past joys and tears.  
Skilled syncopation.  
Sweet melodies.  
Lyrics with rhyming,  
Remind us of all these.

When we now browse our computers,  
We can find these old tunes with ease,  
For many musicians now all round the world,  
Sequence fine midis that please.  
They do rag, stride, roll and ballads.  
Even classical works find a place.  
The range of provision's amazing,  
For all with an eclectic taste.

These virtuosos,  
Roll back the years,  
Stir up old mem'ries,  
Of past joys and tears.  
Skilled syncopation.  
Sweet melodies.  
Lyrics with rhyming,  
Make life a breeze!

## **Guid Spyacks**

Smaachrie an' douce-lik,  
Snooves back ma veesions.  
Sich bide i' ma myn's-ee an' ma saal.  
Lang oors they rist syne,  
Sae ivver syne nar me,  
Muckle easdom tae unfaal.

Luvin wis faither, an' luvin wis mither,  
Sich guid spyacks, faithfu baith.  
Thon sich graun fowk i' ma bairnheid,  
Wi' unforyetable strang graith.

Winnerfu !  
Mervelous !  
Picturs syne weil mynded.  
Hoo they're tappin oan ma saal.  
I' the quaitness,  
O' the even,  
Gweed-gien veesions clair unfaal.

## Auld Rab's Veersions

Aft i' the ev'nin  
Thochts o' his ain kin  
Cam tae mak Rab blythe  
Frae strang luv they kythe  
Hine aff frae moyen  
O' faither's caain'  
Veersions kep his speerits hich  
Fyles draas oan the nicht.  
Imaignaishun  
Taks occupaishun  
Rab's great-hertit mynd  
Whaar sich pleesur's fin  
Sae clair his auld een  
Whit his bleed's de-en  
Wirthy the graun ongaans  
Leernt frae his ain hans.

Syne Rab's mynd tirms roon tae ither thochts  
The teep thit micht be bittie selfit  
Lik, "The sin wull sheen i' the mornin'  
Gien easedom an a o' the waarmth'it  
An quait roon hoose wi nae bairns tae ban  
Oar divert wi laabachs, plyaak  
Fair gled thit a thon be faur wyes aff  
Nae nedcessity be spyack."

The day gings oan till evenin' dreeps  
A' aroon Rab's but-an-ben.  
He aets ..... his denner  
An neest he waashes up  
He poors a dram  
An his a wee bit sup

Sits doon tae hiv a dwam ....

He dwams ilk ev'nin  
An thochts o' his kin  
Cam tae mak him blythe  
Frae strang luv they kythe  
Hine aff frae moyen  
O' faither's caain'  
Veersions kep his speerits hich  
Fyles draas oan the nicht.

Imaignaishun  
Taks occupaishun  
His great-hertit mynd  
Whaar sich pleesur's fin  
Sae clair his auld een  
Whit is noo bein' de-en  
Wirthily ... Leernt frae his hans.

## Braw Beech Hedge

Claise sklentin' by kirk's steeple prood,  
Maist simmer's morns I myn,  
Douce sinlicht tappin' skilhoose nar,  
Its waarmin aye tae rin,  
Up tae thon broon pastures,  
Wi' dykes an' gates an' seg,  
Fyles pirr-winnie sterts tae reshle,  
Leaves o' oor braw beech hedge.

Syne Autumn haars cam swirlin' doon,  
An' mornin' sin jist girns,  
Tae fricht awa ony dowfy aroon,  
St Cyrus folks an' fairms.  
Bit fan November fetches,  
Snell win' oot o' North-East,  
The copper-beech weil clippit,  
Leaves tumble, reshlin' ceas'd

Seen icy roads an' brick-herd grun,  
Cam veesit, times maun bide.  
Snaw fa's deep its beer'yin plaid,  
Syne raxin' faur an' wide.  
Ainly wins oot o' sou-west,  
Wull mak this scunner shift.  
Bit bairns an' bare-hedge yammer on,  
'Bide-a-wee, ye'r shair Gweed's gift.'

Fan Spring-time's gants awaukenin' earth,  
Mak snaw-drops keek aince mair,  
Daffies they flicher an' stacher tae staun,  
Gowd trumpets sniff waarm air.  
Bit oor beech hedge it dozes lang,  
A' its strength tae weil weer tae,  
Aye muckle-grown's needit daen,  
Fore freen mavis cams tae lay.

Aye sklentin' by kirk's steeple prood,  
Maist simmer's dawns I fin,  
Caller sin kittlin' skilhoose wa',  
Its sheenin' shair tae rin.  
Up tae wauk a' wee sleepin' sids,  
Gaird'd wi' dykes an' seg.  
Fyle pirr-winnie seen sterts tae banter,  
Branches o' oor shorn beech hedge.

## Haste Ye Back

Guid meesic maks the warl ging roon,  
It taps an lufts the hairt.  
Wi-oot it naethin' shaws up richt,  
Lik seelence 'fore fowks pairt.  
Bit chiels, gin wycer, full the quait,  
Wi smaachrie vyces clair,  
Thit gledden mony a doolsome myn,  
Whilk fins bein sinder sair.  
Bard Rabbie screeved a sang tae shuit,  
An caa'd it, 'Auld Lang Syne',  
Fan han in hanacroass the lan,  
Freens pairt tae naar oar hine.  
'A'm No Awa Tae Bide Awa',  
Aft they nicht chirm as weil.  
Fyles,  
'Haste Ye Back', we loo ye dearly  
Is,  
Wirth mair nor ony spiel.