



Poems for Pleasure

by

DENNIS JACK PENFOLD

(“Every poem a story—
Every story a poem”)



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dennis Penfold was born in Walthamstow on the 8th of February, 1924. He was educated at Winns Avenue Senior School, where he spent many happy years of his childhood.

He has always had a flair for writing stories and poems, and his favourite subject at school was English and Grammar. His English master was Mr. Green, whom he respected and loved very much. He encouraged Dennis Penfold in his writings and poems, and soon became aware of his hidden talent in this field. His Headmaster was Mr. Gracey, a very forthright and well respected and loved man, who was a credit to the school.

Very often when the other kids were out playing in the streets of an evening. Dennis Penfold would be indoors with his paper and pen, writing his short stories and poems. His talent soon became widespread, and many of his friends and relations were asking him to write poems for them.

He was an acquaintance of the late James Hilton, who wrote stories for the Evening Standard, and who later became a very famous author of that period in the thirties. He wrote "Goodbye Mr. Chips", "Lost Horizon" and many other well-known books which were ultimately made into films featuring many famous stars. Now Dennis Penfold hopes to follow in his footsteps, and is at this moment in the throes of writing his very interesting biography.

He dedicates this book, "Poems for Pleasure", to his dearest Mother and Father, who would have been so proud to have read his delightful works had they been alive today to enjoy them.

DENNIS JACK PENFOLD

The sun was always shining,
my heart was full of joy,
those happy days that T loved so,
when I was just a boy.
The world somehow seemed different,
the pace of life was slow,
my eyes begin to fill with tears,
as memories fondly flow.
I look back with nostalgia.
it's just like a sweet refrain,
I would change but not a single day,
if I could live my life again.

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Sweet Yesterday

Memories are treasures I keep in my heart.
they are all I have left, 'til this world I depart,
I love to look back, as I slowly grow old,
to the years that have passed—for to me they were gold.
Here's just a few of the things that we did,
back in the thirties, when I was a kid.
I always looked forward to Saturday night
an evening excursion filled me with delight,
one and ninepence, a ticket to "Southend-on-Sea",
or, if you preferred it. to "Canvey" or "Leigh".
It was Blackhorse Road Station where we caught the train,
almost every week-end we would go there again;
the train was so packed that you fought for a scat,
if you stood all the way, people nod on your feet.
Most people went there to see all the lights,
and that's how they spent all their Saturday nights.
Fourpence would buy you your sausage and mash.
a jolly good supper, if you had the cash.
Backward and forward the crowd used to roam,
and sing all the way on the train coming home.

Sometimes Sunday morning, if it did not rain,
my father would take me to "Petticoat Lane".
we were pushed, and were shoved, all the way down "Club Row",
it was packed like sardines, as they went to and fro.
I remember distinctly how my heart filled with joy,
when Dad said to the man. "I want a suit for the boy";
I would try them all on, 'til I found one to fit,
and a blue Melton coat then completed my kit.
How excited I was, as we looked round the stalls,
there were woollies and coats, and jumpers and shawls;
you could buy anything under the sun.
and your bags would be full by the time you were done,
although they were heavy, I did not make a fuss
as we made our way home, and got on to the bus.
We cf.me back with winkles and shrimps for our tea,
and when we got home. Mum was pleased as could be;
Dad popped in the off-licence and bought her a stout.
and that was the end of our Sunday morn out.

I loved the week-ends, for they seemed so lone.
Dad would play the piano and give us a song,
a knock on the door, and in came our friends,
each brought a bottle, and a few odds and ends.
Very quickly our party got into full swing.
good were the old fashioned songs we did sing;
one big, happy family together were we,
I am glad that in those days there was no TV.
Oh, what a wonderful time we all had,
they were a couple of bricks, Mum and Dad,
never a worry, and never a care,
warm was that house with the love that was there.
Even the neighbours were friendly and nice,
and if you needed help, then they did not think twice,
you just had to shout if you needed a hand,
the people in those days, believe me, were grand.
We lived in an era where slow was the pace,
when most people wore a nice smile on their face:
although times were hard, and small was the pay,
there was nothing to beat it, my "Sweet Yesterday".

Second Sight

She's worth more than a pot of gold,
She means so much to me,
I could not be without her now.
My friend she'll always be.
My safety all depends on her.
When she is at my side,
I put my faith and trust in her.
Because she is my guide.

Slowly as each step I tread.
With her to lead the way.
Every word I say she understands,
And will instantly obey.

In a busy street of traffic
She then becomes the boss
As patiently she'll sit and wait
'Til it's safe for me to cross.

I do not go out much at night.
For she must have her rest.
She's done her duty for the day.
This love that heaven blessed.
She will fetch my slippers in to me
As I stretch out in my chair.
Then put her head upon my knee
To let me know she's there.

I've only got to make a move
And up she comes to me,
Instinctively she seems to know
I'm blind, and cannot see.
I've had her now for quite a time.
She's an angel in disguise,
I love her so with all my heart—
Because she is my eyes.

I thank the Society for the Blind
For giving her to me,
I did not realise at the time
What a Godsend she would be;
My heartfelt thanks to all concerned
For the wonderful job you do,
I can't express in human terms
My gratitude to you.

I only wish that I could help
In some financial way,
Bel Tin only on a pension
And have to live from day to day.
There is one thing I'd like to say,
With the thought that's in my mind—
May God bless every one of you
For the help you give the blind.

Song of Venice

How I'd love to be with you, beneath the blue Italian skies,
to watch the gondolas drift by, beyond the famous "Bridge of Sighs",
the romance, the music of mandolins,
the sunshine, the laughter, how my heart sings.
Listen to the serenading of those lazy gondoliers,
wander round the shops, and buy enchanting little souvenirs
of Venice the soul of a thousand dreams
will live in my heart for ever.

A Troubled Mind

There's times I sit and wonder
if there is a God above,
I find it very hard to live
in a world that's void of love.
The wicked seem to prosper,
and good fortune comes their way,
the less they do for others,
the more it seems to pay.
It's the innocent that suffer,
it happens every time,
the guilty sell their stories
and get paid for all their crime.

The murders and the muggings,
they go on every day.
I suppose that in this world of sin
it's the price we have to pay.
Life is full of anguish, of suffering and pain.
if God is not responsible,
who is it that's to blame?
The world is overshadowed
by The threat of nuclear war,
one half of the world is rich,
whilst the other half is poor.
A man will pay a fortune
for a painting that is rare,

whilst hundreds of Asian children die,
for the want of food and care.
In those under-developed countries,
where famine and hunger reign,
I am sure that we could help them more,
with milk, and food, and grain.

We spend millions on deterrents,
we live in fear of war,
oh. what a world we live in,
it is rotten to the core
When we read our morning paper
it is full of sex and crime,
and violence we see every day.
to its end there is no sign.
Old ladies, they get beaten up,
for their pension they are robbed.
you are frightened to walk down the street
for the fear of being mobbed.
Our doors were once left open,
for people you could trust,
but now they're barred and bolted
against violence, sex and lust.

What has happened to the culture,
to the decent way of life,
to the good things that we all once knew,
instead of all this strife?
Life was once a joy to live
and good things we were taught,
we realised there was more to life
than bingo, sex and sport.
The country is full of unemployed,
it makes me want to sob,
so many of our fit young men
with no prospects of a job.
I try to lead a Christian life,
with all that it entails.
it's so hard to turn the other cheek
where evilness prevails.

Our Loving Father

God created a perfect world
and filled it with His love,
and everything fell into place
and fitted like a glove.
The earth was void with darkness,
He filled it with His light,
the lightness He called day,
and the darkness He called night.

He filled the heaven with His stars
and a moon to pave our way,
and then He gave us sunshine
to brighten up our day.
He breathed in man the breath of life,
perfection was His aim,
He then created woman
and blessed us in His name.

He gave us fertile land to live,
He gave us seeds to sow.
He also gave us the warmth of the sun
and the rain to make them grow.
He gave us trees and flowers.
He gave us birds to sing,
and in His wisdom God knew all.
He thought of everything.

He gave us creatures great and small,
the good Lord up above,
He gave them freedom of the land,
and blessed them with His love.
He then gave us the seasons
and the utter joy they bring.
He gave us the flowering summer.
the autumn and the spring.

Oh Jesus Christ our Saviour,
He died and rose again,
God sacrificed His only Son,

but did He die in vain?
In this modern world we live in,
as the years roll quickly by,
the past becomes but just a dream
that we live and never die.

The world still holds its beauty
and God is all around,
but love and understanding
are not easy to be found.
God made this world a perfect place
and supplied us with our needs,
the time will come when we meet our Lord
and account for all our deeds.

Ever since the beginning of time
the world's been full of sin,
but it is not the world that is to blame,
but the people that's within.
We now live in a nuclear age
and the world could be destroyed,
then all life would become extinct
and again be dark and void.

Where selfishness and greed prevail,
the world will never change,
let us rebel this evilness
and do goodness in exchange.
Remember that there is no death,
and we possess free will,
so let us live as God ordained
and He will love us still.
When the silver cord is severed
and the spirit casts its shell,
according to the life we've lived
is the plane where it will dwell.

This life is but a nursery,
we're not here for very long,
and free will we are given
to determine right from wrong.

Let us learn to love thy neighbour

and to give a helping hand,
for we shall not pass this way again
on this sweet and pleasant land.

God created this world for us all,
not for a selected few,
whether you're rich or whether you're poor,
whether you're Gentile or Jew.
Whatever our colour, whatever our creed,
after all that has been said,
if we accidentally cut ourself,
does not our blood flow red?

We come into the world with nothing
and go out of it with the same,
it depends on the lessons that we've learnt in life
as to whether we come back again.
Our good deeds are never forgotten
if we give our service to God,
we will not have a care, for we will not be there
when our body lies deep in the sod.

God watches our progress. whatever we do.
and shares in our sorrows and strife,
so always forever to thine own self be true
and you'll earn everlasting life.
We must try to be kind to each other
and love one and other always,
from the day of our birth our time here on earth
is only a passing phase.

So let us lead a Christian life
while there's still time to start,
for we look at the outside,
but God looks at the heart.
When our time on earth has come
to leave this world behind,
may God forgive us for our sins
and give His blessing to mankind.

Oh merciful loving father,
Your teaching let me seek,
for I find it very hard to do,

to turn the other cheek.
Please give me strength and courage
and a will to see me through,
for when I leave the old life
to prepare me for the new.

On The Edge Of The Abyss

I sat and watched the sunbeams as they danced upon the sea,
the sky was blue, and beautiful above,
suddenly I realised just how much it meant to me,
this world that God created with his Jove.
Is man so blind he cannot see how sweet this world could be,
this precious gift of life that God gave man?
Were we meant to live like this, on the edge of the abyss,
or were we born to live our full life span?
The more I sat and thought, the more I was distraught.
and wondered what this life was all about,
ever since my day of birth, there has been no peace on earth,
but conflict in a restless world throughout.

In this world of evil sin. a war no one could win.
its policies I fail to understand,
my heart is gripped with fear, of losing all that I love dear.
the destruction of the world by man's own hand.
If a nuclear war took place, heaven help the human race,
the Bible states the world will end by fire,
let us go forth together, and with all our hearts endeavour
to win peace and love on earth that we desire.
We must go to any length, for unity is strength,
a supreme state of effort is required,
let there be no pretence, for there is no defence
against this evilness the devil has inspired.

In this beautiful world God gave us, if there was nothing that could save us,
what a catastrophic disaster it would be,
let us do what is right, and fight with all our might
to keep this world forever nuclear free.
I would not wish to survive, if I were left alive,

for the aftermath is something that I dread,
all life form would be an end and death would be a friend,
and the living, they would envy those that's dead.
It is so easy to destroy this world that could be joy,
it all depends upon the powers that be;
man can make a nuclear bomb and a plane to drop it from,
but can he make a flower or a tree?
He must be mentally insane and need attention to his brain.
if in his ignorance he's willing to condone,
tor never has there been and never have we seen
the most evil thing the world has ever known.

Dark Victory

There's still a picture in my mind,
although I cannot see,
the beauty that I left behind
lives on in memory.
The green leaves of the summer,
the snowdrops of the spring,
a field of golden buttercups,
and all the joy they bring.

There's nothing that I would not give
to be able just to see
all those lovely things in life
that God bestowed on me.
The wild woodland flowers
as they kiss the morning dew,
and sunbeams merrily dancing
on a sea of sparkling blue.

Oh, what utter joy to see
the sunset in the sky,
the colours of a rainbow
as the purple clouds roll by.
To stroll around the garden
on a warm and sunny day,
to watch the birds as they feed their young,
and abruptly fly away.

I feel nearer to God in a garden,
with the feeling of peace that it brings.
I could spend many hours
among the sweet flowers
and all of those wonderful things.
I often try to visualise the colour and the bloom
as carefully I stoop to smell
their lovely sweet perfume.

It seems to fill my heart with joy
as I slowly wander through,
"Oh God. if only I could see
the things that others do."
The beauty of the autumn
is a sight unto behold,
as all the trees begin to shed
their leaves of red and gold.

To see the early morning mist
and the sun begin to rise,
to hold them in my memory
is a blessing in disguise.
For that is all that I have left,
the picture in my mind,
but precious is my life to me,
even though I'm blind.

Though I live in a world of darkness,
at least there is no pain,
I would give all the wealth that I possess
if I could only see again.

Remember that the gift of sight
is a sweet and precious thing,
and in the world of the blind
the one-eyed man is king.

So for once just close your eyes and think
how fortunate you are
to enjoy the love of beauty
which is near, and yet so far.

Life On The Dole

I've been unemployed for eighteen months, to me this is a sin,
I have worked hard all my working life and not wanted for a thing.
I have never been a lazy man, like others I could name,
when I see the way they loaf around, it fills my heart with shame.
I sometimes feel like one of them, being so long unemployed,
it is soul destroying, when I think of my work I once enjoyed.
At least, I try to find a job, though it's hopelessly in vain,
the pity of it all is this—people think we're all the same.
It's so hard for me to get a job, they say that I'm too old,
I am almost pushing sixty, and feel left out in the cold.
I am too young for a pension, and too old for a job,
there's times I feel so weary I could just sit down and sob.

My soles are wearing thin by now, as I walk the streets all day,
and even in the drizzling rain, when the skies above are grey.
No wonder my poor heart is filled with bitterness and regret,
after trudging round from place to place and arriving home soaking wet.
I am sick of empty pockets, not a pound to call my own,
I haven't had a smoke all day, but I try hard not to moan.
I have written after several jobs, all I do is fill in forms,
you soon realise the futility as gradually it dawns.

They sent me up the "Social", though it went against my grain,
I am not the kind of person who enjoys it to complain,
it did not do me any good, for I did not get a penny,
I wish now that I hadn't gone, like probably so many.
It was full of long-haired layabouts, I heard lots of foreign lingo,
they sat waiting for a hand-out, for their betting slips and bingo.
I could not believe the scene I saw, it was hard to understand,
nearly everyone of them came out with money in their hand.
It was there and then I made up my mind I would never go again,
no more was I prepared to face the stigma and the stain.
I left there with a heavy heart, and feeling so annoyed,
to think that after all this time, I'm still unemployed.
I have drawn out all my savings, that was there for my old age,
now my bank book's looking very sparse, withdrawals on every page.

You cannot get a pension until you're sixty-five,
till then I'll have to carry on the struggle to survive.

At least I don't owe money, I can hold my head up high,
and deep inside I still have my pride, that I'll keep until I die.
Over three million people unemployed, I am just one of the few,
every fortnight they sign on in the never-ending queue.
In this demoralising society, at whose door lies the blame,
who are the ones responsible for such degradation and shame?
In this thankless world we live in there is one thing that I know—
we'll be back to those soup kitchens that we all knew long ago.

The English Rose

Oh perfect rose, I've watched you grow
With pride and dignity.
How often you've filled someone's heart
With joy and ecstasy.
Your petals are so soft and frail
And easy fall apart.
Your fragrance seems to fill the air
From your rich and golden heart.

So many people seem to love
The beauty of your charms.
And many times you must have filled
Some lovely ladies' arms.
Why do people cut your stem
And place you in a bowl.
Or even go as far as to use you
In their buttonhole?

You look perfect where you are.
In God's garden sweet and fair.
That's the place where you belong—
Why don't people leave you there?

Pussykins

I love my little kitten,
Kitty is her name,
I brought her back from work one day,
And I'm so glad that she came.
It did not take her very long
To make herself at home.
And very soon she settled down,
No longer more to roam.

I'm very pleased I have her.
She's a joy unto behold.
Because she means so much to me.
More than a pot of gold.

She has a very pretty face.
In spite of being small.
That's why we named her Kitty,
And I know she loves us all.

The comfort that she brings me
No one could ever know,
When she nestles snugly in my arms
She never wants to go.

I rub her little ears and head.
And then she starts to purr.
And how she loves it when I rub
My fingers through her fur.
Her coat is black and shiny.
She has white blobs on her paws.
Her tummy and her neck are white,
And hasn't she sharp claws?

She often rubs against my leg.
With her tail high in the air,
Then in and out between my legs
To let me know she's there.
I let her out in the garden,
But she doesn't like the rain,

She's soon tapping on the window
To let her in again.

I had to tell her off one day,
And gave her a few words.
She was stalking in the undergrowth.
Waiting to catch birds.
She's not a bit of trouble.
And so clean about the house
And ever since we've had her
We have never seen a mouse.

She loves to play at little games
When she's underneath my stool.
Her favourite game out of them all
Is with a ball of wool.
Then she stands, alert and ready,
With those bright green emerald eyes,
So amusing just to watch her
Try her luck at catching flies.

When I have been at work all day.
And come home late at night.
She springs upon my shoulder
And gives me such a fright.

We also have a little dog,
And just like girls and boys,
At Christmas they sit round the tree
Waiting for their toys.
She knows how we adore her,
And doesn't she like fuss?
She's a member of the family now,
And just like one of us.

When Old Friends Meet

I went down our local market, to have a shop around,
I love to rummage through the stalls, where a bargain can be found,
I have always liked the High Street, and every week I go,
it is always packed with people, it's the pride of Walthamstow.
I got all that I had to get, and when it was complete,
I was ready for a nice sit down, to rest my aching feet.
I went in the "Cock" to have a pint, which was my usual trend,
and as I sat there supping it, in walked a dear old friend.
We had not met for years and years, it was a big surprise,
and when we saw each other, it brought tears unto our eyes.
We had a drink together, with some cheese and crusty bread,
then we talked about the "good old days" and this is what he said.

"Do you remember when we were kids, the games we used to play,
and the way we used to worry our Mums, for a ha'penny every day?
The sweet shop on the corner, where we used to buy our sweets,
a penny dip, a walnut whip, and all those little treats,
and what about old 'fuzzy Lee' and those things she used to say,
the way she used to rant and rave, and chase the kids away?
The rag man who lived up the road, who always came home drunk
and fall into his barrow, which was always full of junk?
Do you remember those birds we met, Dorothy and Pat?
Yours was very tall and thin, and mine was short and fat.
I know we went to chat 'em up, and all they did was giggle,
yours kept powdering her blinkin' nose, and all mine did was wriggle.

"What happened to (he monkey that you had years ago?
What was it that you called him, was it Mick or was it Joe?"
T told him "It was Mickey and in the end he had to go
and how it did upset me, because I loved him so.
He was a little darling, and amused us all day long,
but he got too much for poor old Mum, and we couldn't stand the pong."
He showed me a couple of photos, which brought memories back to me,
old faces I've not seen for years, and the way we used to be.
We wandered through the years that's passed and all that I loved dear,
towards the end he had me almost crying in my beer.
We chatted about our school days, and those lessons we used to dread,
and wondered if the teachers were alive, or were they dead?
Those dear old golden rule days, oh how happy we used to be,

in at nine and out at four, what a life of luxury.

"Do you still play the squeeze box. Den?" my old pal said to me.
Weren't you in ENSA back in nineteen forty-three?;
I always loved to listen to "Music While You Work"
before the days I was called up and sent out to Dunkirk.
"I know that many years ago you played in different bands."
I replied that I no longer play, as I have arthritic hands.
"Oh what a bloomin' shame," he said, "you used to play so good,
if only I could help some way, believe me Den, I would."

"How's your sister getting on," I turned to him and said,
"I always fancied her, you know, before she married Fred "
"I hardly ever see her now," was my old mate's reply,
"she's living down at Harlow, somewhere near The High.
She has a grown up family now, two daughters and a son,
they've got all the money now, and that poor cow's got none."

We sat and had a few more drinks, while happy memories flowed,
and stayed until we got chucked out, and staggered up the road,
dear old pals again together, walking down nostalgia street,
oh what a turn up for the book it is when old friends meet.

Life Hereafter

Do not worry, do not grieve,
shed no more tears for me,
for I am in a better place,
my spirit now is free.
There is no sickness, there is no pain,
no worry, struggle, or strife,
no suffering or fear of death,
but everlasting life.

Think not of how I used to be,
for my body now is whole,
there is no such thing as affliction here,
for the Lord has blessed my soul.

When our span of life on earth expires
it is not the end by far,
and only then do we see ourselves
for what we really are.

It is like the reflection in a stream
that shimmers in the light,
all the things that have been left undone
it's too late to put them right.
You cannot bring your money here,
for nothing it could change.
for only true unselfish love
is the token of exchange.

Your status and your personal wealth
are gone, as you will find,
it is only useful there on earth,
in the world you've left behind.
If you plant a tiny seed of love
in this world that God loved so,
and tend it with your loving care
it will germinate and grow.
I cannot express in terms of words
the beauty that is here,
there are colours that you've never seen,
and God is always near.
'Tis a world of utter peace and joy
where love is all around,
where the lion lies down with the lamb,
side by side, upon the ground.

I just think of where I want to be
and instantly I'm there,
it is all done through the power of thought.
I can travel anywhere.
I feel sad when you are lonely,
when your tears you cannot hide.
but often I am with you,
and standing by your side.

I try to bring you comfort.
I can stay but for a while,
sometimes I feel you know I'm there

when your lips part with a smile.
So weep no more, my darling,
for death is but a name,
all our friends and loved ones of this earth
will one day meet again.

Down By The River

Down by the river I long to be.
where weeping willows whisper to me,
song birds are singing their sweet melody,
down by the river, waiting for thee.
Wild honeysuckle, kissing the dew,
gold with the sunbeams, smiling on you,
sweet is the world that God gave to me,
oh, how I love that tranquillity.
Beautiful dreamer, down by the stream,
if I'm a dreamer, just let me dream.

Petticoat Lane

I often go up there, time and again,
on Sunday morning to Petticoat Lane;
it is always crowded with all kinds of folk,
I go up there with money and then come back broke.
There are so many different things you can buy,
from an old antique pot to a modern hi-fi.
I usually make my way to Club Row
and I come back with something whenever I go,
I get such a kick when I rummage through stalls
to pick up a bargain, as I stand there and pause.
You never know what you may find,
you can stand there for ages and know they don't
mind.

Each stallholder has his own private pitch,
from the start of Brick Lane to the end of Houndsditch.

Side streets and back streets, you see them all there,
and there's no other market that you can compare.
I have often stood round and seen people get caught,
but half of the time it is through their own fault.
Some people are stupid, will they never learn,
as they part with their cash and get nowt in return.
Tf there's an auction about to commence,
the first thing they do is collect fifty pence,
that is the biggest con under the sun,
for they know you won't leave 'til the auction is done.

Free gifts he will throw as the crowd gather round,
then he'll pick up a box. and on top put a pound,
"Who will give me a dollar for this?"
up shoot the hands in their ignorant bliss.
He then says, "I'm going to give you a treat,
here is an offer I cannot repeat,"
up come more boxes, all different in size,
"Who will make it a fiver?" is the next thing he cries.

"Come on, you people, I want a good sport,"
and there's always a fool that's about to be caught.
There's one born every minute, believe me it's true,
so don't let this stupid thing happen to you.

As slowly I elbow my way through the mob,
I treat myself, with my remaining few bob.
It's hard to explain just how good that it feels
as T happily dig into my jellied eels.
I bring back some winkles and shrimps for my tea,
these small things in life mean a great deal to mc.
I pop into the pub, just across the main street,
for my pint of best bitter and to rest my poor feet.
Somehow it seems to wind up the day,
then I hop on the bus and I'm off. on my way.
A most pleasant morning, with bargains galore,
"Roll on next Sunday, and let's have some more."

Memories Sweet

Memories sweetly linger
As time goes on its way,
Those happy moments that we shared
Are now so far away.
Though sadness sometimes fills my heart
As I stroll down memory lane,
In my loneliness I think of you.
Though it always brings me pain.
Every hour I miss you so
As each day passes by,
I simply can't forget you
No matter how I try.

We used to be so happy once,
My life was filled with bliss
When I used to take you in my arms
And plant a little kiss.
Arm in arm together
You were always by my side,
I used to take your hand in mine
And looked on you with pride.
I always called you sweetheart.
To me that was your name,
As tenderly I touched your cheek.
My heart so full of flame.

Slowly as I wander
Through the years that now have passed,
I can't believe that it is true
That our love did not last.

You left me for another.
Now I hope you're satisfied.
No longer will I kiss your face
Or those lips to me that lied.
People say that I'm a fool
To feel the way I do.
It's so hard for me to realise
That you've found somebody new.

Perhaps they're right in what they say.
Am I so blind to see?
How possibly could I forgive
All those things you've done to me.
I gave you all I had to give
Because I loved you so.
Why you no longer love me
I'm sure I'll never know.

Whatever came between us.
That drifted us to part.
My one regret is, I can't forget
The curse of an aching heart.

Red Rose

I've yet to see a flower
As lovely as a rose
In colour and in splendour.
In the beauty that it shows.
It fills the air with loveliness.
Its fragrance rich and sweet.
Yet just another dream of God
To make the world complete.

Oh lovely rose I must confess
There really is no other.
You always seem to win your way
To the heart of every lover.
Your petals are so deep, so red.
Words fail me to express.
The simplicity of your lovely charm
Brings joy and happiness.

Although these phrases may be sweet,
Words fail to do you duty,
For no words ever could express
Your everlasting beauty.

A Mother's Love

My daughter is a spastic child,
But she's all the world to me.
With all the love that's in my heart
I give her tenderly.
I must confess when she was born
That sadness filled my heart.
To express the feeling that I felt.
It's difficult to start.

The day I learned the bitter truth,
I cried and cried for hours.
To compensate my shattered heart
They plied me with their flowers.
They sat with me around my bed,
My family and my friends.
But with all their words of sympathy
It could not make amends.

The bitterness that I endured
No one could ever know.
How could God do this thing to me
When I've always loved Him so?
I've tried to live a decent life.
To help those who are in need,
And in return, what do I get?—
A broken heart indeed.

My bitterness slowly ebbed away.
As it does with passing time,
I shower her with all my love.
Because I know she's mine.
There's times I shed a tear or two
In my moments of despair,
When her little face looks up at me,
With blue eyes and golden hair.

I put my arms around her
And hug her to my heart.
As silently I say a prayer,
"Please God, don't let us part."

I realise now that, after all.
She is my kith and kin.
But I did not know it was so hard
To pay the price of sin.

They say that it's an act of God,
But please don't ask me why,
All I know is that for evermore
I will love her 'til I die.
There are many mothers like myself,
I know just how they feel.
But remember when I tell you this—
That time will surely heal.

Southend-On-Sea

I don't want New York. Brussels. Páire,
you can keep all those places, they're not meant for me,
Monte Carlo, Majorca, Rome or Capri,
the best place of all is dear Southend-on-Sea.
Good is the air when the breezes they blow,
and it doesn't cost the earth from my Walthamstow.
To stroll down the Pier gives me a good appetite,
when I reach the end, I can do with a bite,
I like jellied eels, and sausage and mash,
you can keep foreign food and that blinking trash,
I like English beer and my cup of tea,
you really can't beat it, Fm sure you'll agree.

I don't get "Spanish turn", I'm not pestered by flies,
it is such a blessing when I close my eyes,
there are no mosquitoes to give me a bite,
I get a good sleep when I turn in at night.
I've seen several places across the blue sea,
but I'm glad to get home, they appeal not to me.
All my dear family love Southend-on-Sea,
and if it's good enough for them—
then it's good enough for me.

A Tribute To Winston Churchill

I drink a toast to Mr. Churchill.
The man who saw us through,
We all owe you our gratitude.
Our hats arc off to you.
In Britain's hour of darkness
When peril was so near.
You gave us hope and courage
And banished all our fear.

Let no man speak against you, sir.
In doubt or hesitation,
For it was you, we're proud to say.
That helped to save our nation.
So well do we remember
How inspiring were your speeches
That we would fight in towns and streets,
And even on our beaches.

Things were bad at times, we know,
And many a heart was sad
To be parted from the ones we loved.
And everything we had;
Our towns and streets were shattered,
Our homes they were destroyed.
And many things we had to face
We just could not avoid.

We knew that God was with us.
And that right must prevail.
We were fighting for our freedom,
That's why we didn't fail.
So once again, I raise my glass.
With pride and dignity.
To drink to Mr. Churchill.
Whose courage kept us free.

Memory Lane

There's a photo that stands on my old mantleshelf
in a small broken golden frame,
each day I kiss it and hug to my heart,
for all I have left is his name.

The picture is fading and yellow with age,
but all of the features are there,
that far away look that he had in his eyes,
and that silvery lock in his hair.

Now the gold's turning black, and the glass has a crack,
but it holds happy memories for me,
for the Lord up above gave him to me to love,
and I will 'til eternity.

Each day he is fussed as I blow off the dust,
and I talk to him every day,
though it's only a photo that can't answer back,
he talks to me in his own way.

Now the years have rolled by, like the clouds in the sky,
and I'm getting no younger myself,
but he's still in my heart, and I could never part
with the photo that stands on my shelf.

Mother

Darling Mum I miss you so,
'Tis sad we had to part,
I kiss your photo every day
And hold it to my heart.
The memory of you lingers long,
You're always in my mind,
I can't express my love for you.
Because you were so kind.

You sacrificed so much for me,
It was no easy task,

And if I wanted anything,
I only had to ask.
You often went without yourself.
Just to give to me.
And every little thing you did
Was done unselfishly.

In my loneliness I think of you,
And see your smiling face.
Still in my heart I cling to you.
No one can take your place.

If tears could bring you back to me,
I would weep for you all day;
I would fill an ocean with my tears
As I lift my arms to pray.

There's many times I come across
Those things you loved so dear.
And somehow as I look at them
I feel that you are near.

You're never really far away.
Because I love you so.
The sadness that's within my heart
No one will ever know.
The Bible says we'll meet again,
I'm sure that this is true,
I'll cherish always
'Til then, my love.
The memory of you.

People Like Us

I remember when we lived down Livingstone Road
in a two-bedroom flat, which was our fixed abode,
my poor Mum and Dad used to struggle and strive,
and oh! what a job it was to survive.
Most of the families were hard up and poor,
but somehow they managed to keep the wolf from the door.
My parents were blessed with their small, happy breed,
five snotty-nosed children, and five mouths to feed.
Most of the time we would be out all day,
the street was our playground, where we used to play.
I had one little sister, and Win was her name,
three elder brothers, who all looked the same.
Handed down clothes were the garments we wore,
we would wear them until we could wear them no more.

When our boots needed mending, Dad used to repair,
I can still see him now, hobbing foot on the chair.
He made sure that his family were always well shod,
and we always looked like five peas in a pod.

In those days we lived in Leyton, E.10,
and the memories still flow as this paper I pea
All of us kids went to Capworth Street School,
where "try, try again" was their main golden rule.
The teachers were strict and made sure that we learned,
and deserved every bit of respect that they earned.
It's funny the things that your mind will recall,
like the paraffin lamp on the old passage wall,
the smell of the oil that pervaded the air,
and the way that the flame used to flicker and flare.
The soft, gentle hiss and the green, eerie light
that the gas used to give when we lit up at night,
the way that it used to splatter and plop,
and when Dad lit the mantle, how it always went pop.

I remember the old fashioned black iron range,
it was one of my jobs I would gladly exchange,
with a small block of Zebra I would blacklead the hobs,
that was one of my regular Saturday jobs.
I would emery the fender until it shone bright,

and then pumice stone the hearth, brilliant white,
when it was finished it looked spick and span,
and my next job would be to go round and help Gran.
I would run all her errands, and scrub her stone floor,
then would clean all the brass on her heavy oak door,
she then gave me her bag and sent me to the "Clyde"
for a pint of their porter, on which she relied.
When my job was completed, I felt really glad,
she would slip me two pennies and say, "Don't tell Dad",
I then hurried off home, with joy in my heart,
and bought a nice ice-cream cornel from the first ice-cream cart.

Just round the corner was the old "Bakers Arms",
and the hustle and bustle was part of its charms,
the old rumbling trains used to clatter and clang,
and outside the pub the Salvation Army they sang.
All of these things used to fill me with joy,
they were part of my life when I was a small boy.
With a ha'penny to spend I would buy some stale cakes,
to go back to those days, my poor heart almost aches,
we lived life to the full, with the minimum of fuss—
I wonder who's left of the people like us?

Heartbreak House

(The Dog's home)

I went to heartbreak house one day,
I call it by that name.
The sadness I encountered there.
It put my heart to shame.
A little dog looked up at me,
With eyes of sullen grey.
If he could only speak I'm sure
That this is what he'd say:

I've been here now for several days.
No longer can I roam,
I'm hoping some kind person

Will take me to their home.
I'm getting rather worried now.
My time is at an end.
If you could give me shelter
I will always be your friend.

"They say a pussy has nine lives.
But I have only one,
Cuddly they are maybe,
But I am twice the fun.
I would not be here if my owner
Hadn't moved away,
And oh, those endless hours
That I spend here every day.

"There's quite a lot of doggies here
Much lovelier than I,
Perhaps that's why so many folks
Just look, and pass me by.
At that time I did not know
That soon we'd have to part,
It's sad—no longer can I give
The love that filled my heart.

"I've never had a lot of fuss
Or affection, that is true,
But a little pat upon my head
And a few kind words will do.
I love to play with children,
So there'll be no problem there.
And if they take me out for walks
I'll look after them with care.

"So please show a little mercy.
And open up your heart.
Then I promise you that always
I will love you from the start.
I have not got a master now,
To that I must agree,
Do anything you want, but please,
Don't take my life from me."

Just Like It Was

How times have changed since I was a boy,
when a sixpenny train set filled my heart with joy;
the kids of today seem to have what they like,
with their video games and their fifty quid bike.
They think nothing of spending pounds upon pounds
for computerised games, with electronic sounds.
In our time of day we had just as much fun
with our sixpenny game and a cap-shooting gun.
We thought ourselves lucky if we had a toy,
that's what it was like, when I was a boy.

I remember the time, with my heart filled with haste,
I mixed flour and water into a smooth paste.
How vivid the memory still with me remains,
a ha'penny a packet of bright coloured chains.
I would sit at the table for hours on end,
pasting together the chains with my friend.
For a penny per packet, they were treated with gum.
but pasting them up was all part of the fun
In those golden days how happy were we,
those small things in life that meant so much to me.

I cannot express the joy that I found,
counting the days until Christmas came round.
My dear little sister, she wanted a doll,
that's all that she asked for, the poor little soul.
I would have been happy with soldiers and drum,
we could not wait for dear Santa to come.
We would hang up our stocking at the foot of the bed,
"If you don't go to sleep, he won't come," my Mum said.
We both lay awake until late in the night,
sick with excitement, hearts filled with delight.
Our stockings were filled with home-made sweets from Strutts,
an apple, an orange, a handful of nuts.
Perhaps there would be a comic or two,
with six golden pennies, all shiny and new.
Oh, how I loved that "jack in the box",
the bright coloured tie and a new pair of socks.
I got snakes and ladders and ludo as well,

and a red fire engine, complete with its bell.

My sister was thrilled with her sweet little doll,
with its bright coloured frock and its little fur stole.
Those wonderful things made our Christmas complete,
as we hurried to show all the kids down our street.
They were not much, compared with what kids get today,
but they meant such a lot in their own kind of way.
Those old fashioned parties that filled us with glee,
as we sang Christmas carols and stood round the tree.
Every tear is a memory from my treasure chest,
and I still say that those days were far more the best.
The true meaning of Christmas has sadly declined,
the world has got selfish and people unkind,
they are certainly not like they once used to be,
when they helped one another so unselfishly.
The whole way of life has dramatically changed,
when small gifts were given and greetings exchanged.
I look back to the past with nostalgia because
Christmas will never be just like it was.
Somehow, it seems to have got out of hand,
the way they have changed, I cannot understand.
It's the shopkeepers' paradise once every year,
with their rattling tills and their words of good cheer.
When will we realise, and use common sense—
I am sure it doesn't merit such costly expense.

My Treasure

I've had her since she was a pup.
She was only six weeks old.
A little ball of soft brown fluff
To me was cheaply sold.
I popped her underneath my coat
And on my way I went.
Delighted in my heart to know
My money was well spent.

I hurried to the nearest bus

And sat her on my lap,
When a tiny head poked from my coat
And gave a little yap.
She grasped my finger in her mouth.
And then began to chew.
Her saucy little face looked up,
With eyes of puppy blue.

She quickly settled down at home
And very soon did grow,
She won her way into our hearts.
And we all loved her so.

We've had her now for fourteen years.
She's been a faithful friend,
Amused us with her little ways
For hours and hours on end.
She seems to thank us in her way
For treating her so kind.
But now we love her even more.
Because she's going blind.

Her whiskers now have turned to grey,
As sadly she grows old.
But still she is the world to us,
God bless her heart of gold.

Golden Days

Gold are my memories of long, long ago,
the days of my childhood in old Walthamstow;
Mum did her shopping late Saturday night,
the High Street was packed and was blazing with light.
I look back with nostalgia as my mind recalls
the green naphta lights as they hissed on the stalls.
We would elbow our way through the tightly packed mob,
and buy two dozen oranges, "only a bob",
a bagful of apples, and lovely sweet pears,

with just a few bob, we were all millionaires.
Tasty pease pudding and hot saveloys,
and savoury hot faggots was one of our joys.

Three and a tanner would buy Sunday's meat,
with something on top, in the way of a treat,
outside their shop, where they used to tout,
"Buy, buy, buy, buy," they would holler and shout.
All pushing and shoving the crowd gathered round,
where bargains galore were there to be found.
An aitch bone of beef, or a bit of topside,
the strokes they came out with, I laughed till I cried.
They did not have freezers in my time of day,
no wonder the shops almost gave it away.

We would wander round Woolworth's, my heart filled with joy,
for only a tanner, you came out with a toy;
there were bright coloured balls, and all kinds of games,
and sweet, pretty dollies with all different names.
A box of toy soldiers, a tank or a fort,
we all had a bargain, whatever we bought;
with a few meagre coppers clutched tight in my hand,
the world was my oyster and life was so grand.

We would go to the "Palace" and get in the queue,
and as the doors opened, we all bustled through,
up in the gods for fourpence we'd go,
munching our peanuts as we watched the show.
A strong smell of orange pervaded the air.
and after the show there was peel everywhere.
Bags of sweets they would throw, to our great delight,
every Thursday and Friday was carnival night.
It was "Spotlight" on Wednesday and what a surprise,
if the light stopped on you, you went up for your prize.
Tears fill my eyes as this story I tell
of a jolly good show, 'til the last curtain fell.

If we were lucky and still had some cash,
we would go into Manze's for a hot pie and mash,
it only cost tuppence and when we came out
Mum would go in the "Cock" for her half-pint of stout.
I listened with joy to the good "Sally Ann",
and outside the door stood the old chestnut man,

hot baked potatoes, a ha'penny a time,
no wonder my life was so sweet and sublime.
A penny a sheet for the latest of songs,
oh for that era where my heart belongs.
All those wonderful memories are now but a dream
that have swiftly passed by, like a fast flowing stream;
as I reminisce in my twilight of life
and look back on those days, full of trouble and strife,
I would change not a day, nor a month, nor a year,
they will live in my heart with all I hold dear,
sweet, tender memories forever will flow
of my young childhood days in old Walthamstow.

Looking Back

I love to look back on the old days,
the way that they once used to be,
all the things that I did when I was a kid
are now but a sweet memory.
I loved my dear mother and father.
the whole world they both meant to me,
they taught me the difference between right and
wrong, truthfulness, honesty.
The values of life were so different,
strict was the world of the young,
I remember with fear of my schooldays,
songs of glory we robustly sung.
In the hall we would line up like soldiers,
our backs were as straight as could be,
runny noses, and torn baggy trousers,
with one sock that drooped down from the knee.

Many a lad, he wore "cut-downs",
sad was the plight of the poor,
the teachers looked on with grim faces
at the poverty that they all saw.
Every picture, it told its own story,
each in its own different way,
as proudly we waved our Union Jacks,

each year on Empire Day.
We were not very healthy in those days,
pale faces were all you could see,
malnutrition, rickets and ringworm
were prevalent in every degree.

I remember the eleventh of November.
"Stand to attention," our headmaster said,
we were all lined up in the playground,
as we stood there to honour the dead.
All the kids in the school wore a poppy,
for two minutes was silence observed,
in respect for our glorious army
which our fathers had all proudly served.
We were taught to be proud of our country,
George the Fifth was well loved as our King,
we respected and honoured Queen Mary,
patriotic songs we did sing.

We learned poems by the great Rudyard Kipling,
T. S. Eliot and Shakespeare as well,
they knew how to teach us in those days,
how to read, how to write, how to spell.
We had great respect for our teachers,
paid attention to all that was said,
they made sure that we learned our lessons,
or you were sent straight to the head.
That's what it was like in the twenties,
with nostalgia I look at the past,
that quick, passing phase of my sweet childhood days—
why have those years all gone so fast?
The kids of today are so different,
perhaps it is all for the best,
sweet memories still flow of those long years ago
that still linger in my treasure chest.
I suppose we will all be forgotten,
when this era is far left behind,
all the things that we did when we were a kid
will be all out of sight, out of mind.

Lest We Forget

In the fields of Flanders, poppies grow,
by a million crosses, row on row,
they fertilised it with their blood
as they fought knee deep in Flanders mud.
In human terms, to count the cost
would be futile, for the lives that's lost,
for only God can know the truth
of the sacrifice of the flower of youth.

They were led like lambs to the slaughter,
in the Lord, they put their trust,
while the guns cut them to pieces,
their lives were less than dust.
The shells came whining overhead,
shrapnel flying to and fro,
there were mutilated bodies
in the trenches down below.

There were bodies strewn about the ground,
some hanging on the wire,
their cries for help, they were in vain
in the avalanche of fire.
Our boys, they roughed it night and day,
it was four years of hell,
the only peace they ever got
was when they died, and fell.

When they heard the bugle sound,
in the cookhouse they would cram
for their bully beef and biscuits,
and their plum and apple jam.
They helped their wounded comrades
on the brink of death's dark vale,
just a cup of human kindness
down the long, long winding trail.
They showed fortitude and courage
as they fought for useless ground
in the face of extreme danger,
with the enemy all around.

Now the battlefield is silent
where they fought, and killed the foe,
and only a bird can now be heard
where so much blood did flow,
and when we hear the "Last Post" sound
for those who sleep deep, in the ground,
we think of them as we reflect,
and honour them, with deep respect.

They did not give their lives in vain,
those brave and gallant men,
and at the setting of the sun
we shall remember them.
They say that war is made by man,
so who is it that's to blame
for such sacrilege and loss of life,
of the limbless and the lame,
the broken body, the shattered mind,
the scarred and eyeless face,
do we blame God for all these things,
or blame the human race?

Once a year they are remembered
at the famous Albert Hall,
where many silent tears are shed
as the poppies start to fall.
Each petal represents a life
as we pay homage to our dead,
while sadness fills an aching heart
as in respect we bow our head.
There are but few of the warriors left
who can remind us of the hell
as they gather round the Cenotaph
in prayer for those who fell.

As Big Ben chimes eleven o'clock,
then silence fills the air,
for those who mourn and have bravely borne
their sorrow and despair.
Have you ever stopped to think
of the horror that they saw,
the destruction of the human race
by the ravages of war,

for no one wins them in the end,
for there's nothing to be won,
but devastation to the world
and the loss of someone's son.

Every year I proudly wear a poppy on my coat,
with all the sadness in my heart
and a lump within my throat;
so let us fight, with all our might,
the evilness of war,
and pray to God that peace will reign
in this world for evermore.
When the poppies bloom remember
that we all owe them a debt,
a permanent reminder to us all, lest we forget.

Nostalgia Street

Sweet memories linger that make me feel sad,
how the years have rolled by, since I was a small lad;
tears fill my eyes when old friends I meet,
when we take a walk down "Nostalgia Street".
One of the things that filled me with delight
was to go up the High Street on Saturday night,
with all the lights blazing, it was an event,
and good value you got for the money you spent.
Lidstone's, the drapers, was a large corner store.
there was always a welcome as you walked through the door;
I remember it well, when I was a lad,
Mum would look in the window, then drag in poor Dad.
Wicks used to auction sweets outside his shop,
boxes of chocolates, and more sweets on top,
"Who will give me two bob?" he would say.
"If you can't afford it, I'll give 'em away";
the crowd all surged forward, and up shot their hand,
everyone was a winner, and they tasted so grand.
Most of the butchers, they did a good trade,
and you got a bargain for the price that you paid,
a nice week-end joint for just a few bob,
when I think of it now. I could break down and sob.
Apples and oranges were cheap at the price,

if you had a few bob, life was sweet, paradise;
though money was scarce, it would go a long way,
and you got much more for it than you do today.

I was there when the black shirts met down Leucha Road,
when a scuffle broke out, and a little blood flowed;
I remember the women, how they screamed and howled,
as mounted police with drawn batons charged into the crowd.
Even today, no matter how hard I try,
it will always stay with me, 'til the day that I die,
never before had I been so afraid,
I suppose after all that's how history was made.

The Walthamstow Palace was my special treat,
as I queued up outside in the hope of a seat;
street buskers came round and entertained you
with a song and a dance, as you stood in the queue.
As we started to move and go in for the show,
they came round with their hat, then off they would go.
It was fourpence the gallery, and sixpence the stalls,
one shilling the circle, my mind still recalls.
How I loved a circus, and adored every clown,
and my heart filled with joy as balloons floated down.
I look back with nostalgia to those days of that time,
when they pulled down that building, to me was a crime.
Films at the cinema continually ran,
and outside the Carlton stood the old chestnut man,
they tasted delicious, all lovely and hot,
for only a penny, such value we got.
Every Saturday night, round about ten o'clock,
with the shopping all done. Mum would go in the "Cock",
never once, my dear Mum, did she ever miss out,
for she always looked forward to her glass of stout.
Now as I look back to the laughter, and tears,
I relive them all, all those wonderful years,
memories still haunt me, as they come and go,
though I am much older, they still seem to flow.
Oh, how I wish I could wind back the clock,
as I sip at my pint, with my mate in the "Cock",
my dear Mum and Dad are no longer with me,
their memory I cherish in my reverie;
'tis the end of my story, now it is complete,
and thank you for coming down "Nostalgia Street"

Love

Love is a thing that money can't buy,
it remains in your heart 'til the day that you die,
when you've been forsaken it's hard to accept,
your eyes become dim with the tears you have wept—
loneliness is so hard to endure,
when the love you once had was so sweet, and so pure.

You cannot explain that feeling inside,
as you choke back the tears, you try so hard to hide.
Sweet memories linger, they make you feel sad
when you think of the happiness that you once had;
you try to push them out of your mind,
but they keep coming back, you can't leave them behind.

Like an old wedding ring that has broken apart,
how can you mend a sad, broken heart?
A heart that was once filled with love and with joy,
to be cast aside, like an old broken toy.
The pain that you feel, you cannot explain,
those sweet, tender kisses that were all in vain.

You look back with sadness on the years that have passed.
when you thought at the time that such true love would last,
you just can't believe that it's happened to you,
when you take love for granted, but believe me, it's true.
They say time's a healer, but this I don't find,
but only despair in a world so unkind,
nothing you say. and nothing you do
can alter the course life has chosen for you.

You feel that your world has come to an end,
and that only death could be your best friend,
but somewhere someone must feel just like you,
it's the world that we live in, it's sad but it's true.

There's times that I pray to the Lord up above
to send me somebody to cherish and love,
in His infinite wisdom. He surely must know
of the sadness I feel that I try not to show.
A world without love is like a tree without birds,

like a sky without stars, like a song without words.
like this cruel bitter world, where we live and we die.
love is a thing that no money can buy.

Childhood Days

Gone are the days that once used to be,
those long, golden days that meant so much to me;
life was so different when I was a boy,
the world was my oyster, my pride and my joy.
We did not have much, like the kids have today,
but we were so happy in our own kind of way.
With a broken clay pipe, many hours I would spend
blowing big coloured bubbles with my little friend.
We would look at our comics, and enjoy every one,
the "Wizard", the "Hotspur", and of course our "Film Fun".

We would play in the garden, and be out there all day,
no trouble to anyone and there we would stay.
I used to run errands for the folks down our street,
and if given a halfpenny, it was such a treat;
there were so many things that a halfpenny would buy,
I'll remember them all, 'til the day that I die.
There were bright coloured marbles, yoyo's and tops.
all these lovely things you could buy in the shops.
You only required a copper or two,
and in every shop window you would find something new.

My parents weren't wealthy, they did not have a lot,
but we were so pleased with the little we'd got;
we were not used to money, so did not miss a thing,
with a sixpenny toy we felt like a king.
On a Saturday morn to the flicks I would go,
to the "tuppenny rush" where we had a good show,
I would queue up outside, with joy in my heart,
and would rush to my seat just in time for the start.
We would sit there in bliss, licking our ice-cream cones,
cheering Tom Mix, or cheering Buck Jones.
It was the best two penn'orth that I ever had,
and when I arrived home, I would tell Mum and Dad.

I loved to go fishing, it was my favourite sport,
and would show all the kids all the fish I had caught,
I had red rosy cheeks from the warmth of the sun—
how could you put a price on such joy and such fun?
The holidays always meant so much to me,
we would stay in a caravan, close to the sea;
I loved every moment, a week seemed so long,
no wonder my heart was filled always with song.
I would go to the shop and buy all kinds of sweets,
sherbet dabs, lollipops, all kinds of treats,
I had in my pocket a sixpence to spend,
my darling old Dad, he was such a friend.

It seemed such a long way coming home on the train
as we flashed past the fields that were golden with grain;
all these wonderful things now stand out in my mind,
of those sweet happy days, which are now left behind.
They are but a memory as I turn every page
of my old photo album, which is now yellow with age;
I look back with nostalgia as sadly I sigh
for those sweet childhood days which have now passed me by.

Memories Are Made Of This

Way back in the thirties, when I was a lad,
hard were those times for my poor Mum and Dad;
even today, how those memories still flow,
of the house that we lived in, in old Walthamstow.
Two up, and two down, with the toilet outside,
the front room, or parlour, was my mothers pride,
cheap little ornaments stood on the shelf,
and an upright piano was the soul of her wealth.
There were seven in family, and Dad was the head,
with his small, meagre wage, to keep us all fed;
no wonder my poor father's hair turned to grey,
with no other income—except his small pay.
I will tell you of what it was like to be poor,
how your heart missed a beat with each knock at the door.

We would sit in the room, and not make a sound,
and pretend to be out when the rent man came round.

Fish Brothers, the pawn shop, did a good trade,
"humiliation" was the price that we paid,
we would hand in our bundles on each Monday morn,
whatever we had that we found we could pawn.
We always redeemed them at the week-end,
they went in again Monday, and that was the trend.
Week after week it was always the same,
not a shilling, poor Mum. did she have to her name.
Things did not get better, in fact they got worse,
as her fingers would fumble in her poor, empty purse.
Many a time she would slip off her ring,
"Get as much as you can" was the song she would sing,
so off to the pawn shop, with tongue in my cheek,
for a couple of quid to see us through the week.

I remember each Monday was Mum's washing day,
"Get me a bag of blue," she would say,
in came the galvanised bath from the yard—
life in the thirties, believe me, was hard.
She would light up a fire, and oh! what a whopper,
as the steam billowed out from the old fashioned copper.
Those long years ago, my mind still recalls
the water that ran down the damp, steamy walls.
I can still see her now, as away she would scrub,
on the washing board, sticking out of her tub.
A tuppenny packet of soapflakes she'd buy,
and a penny it was for her cream Dolly dye,
the sweat used to run down her pale, wrinkled face,
as she laboured away in a small confined space.
No wonder poor Mum always looked tired and worn,
her shabby old apron all tattered and torn,
if ever a medal was given away,
"I'm sure she deserved it," is what they would say.

Out came the mangle, that huge iron frame,
washing day Monday was always the same,
as I turned the handle, the water ran out,
and that is what washing day was all about.

Cold meat and pickles was the meal of the day,

and when we were done, I would clear it away,
then we'd hang out the washing on the clothes line, to dry,
then Mum would sink down in her chair, with a sigh.
"Thank goodness that's over." were the words she would say,
and then she would iron them all the next day.
In these modern times, it seems hard to be true,
nobody knows what my poor Mum went through;
those days in the thirties, I still reminisce,
after all's said and done—
memories are made of this.

The Penny World

THE PENNY WORLD

Life is just like a swift, flowing stream
that passes you by, and becomes but a dream,
memories still linger, and with you remain,
some time in your life you relive them again.
'Twas twelve pence to a shilling when I was a lad,
and life on the whole, well it wasn't too bad,
the ha'pennies and pennies we spent every day
gave us good value, and went a long way.

My Dad sent me out for a half ounce of shag,
and the "Walthamstow Guardian", which was our local rag,
it only cost tuppence and was good to peruse,
full of spoiling events and the latest of news.

Just round the corner was our grocer's shop.
Mum would give me her basket, and in I would pop,
everything that we purchased was always on tick,
they were glad of your custom and service was quick.
Sometimes Mum sent me for a quarter of ham.
and a pennorth of pickles in a cup they would cram,
on my way back it was my favourite trick
to dip in my finger and have a quick lick.

I always looked forward to the coming week-end,
especially if I had a few bob to spend,
I loved to watch football, and enjoyed a good game,

and was always delighted when Saturday came,
Walthamstow Avenue was my favourite team,
in amateur football, well they were the cream,
it was fourpence for adults and tuppence for boys,
I looked forward to going, it was one of my joys.
It was a penny a programme and the same on the ball,
sixpence a cup match, my mind does recall.
it was Jimmy Lewis who captained the side,
the crowd all adored him. and he was their pride,
I've seen him score goals from twenty yards out,
"Come on my cocker," an old girl would shout,
that lives on in my memory, even today,
his quick thinking mind and the skill of his play.

There was no television in those days gone by,
and life was much better, contented was I,
the wireless gave us all! the things we require,
and we all sat around a nice big open fire.
We heard Scott and Whaley and Wee Georgie Wood,
the programmes were live and were all very good,
the licence was only ten bob for a year,
and yet we still grumbled and thought it was dear.

I loved to go shopping with Mum late at night,
in all kinds of weather when the winds used to bite,
we would look round the stalls for hours on end,
in those days the customer was their best friend.
Mum always came home with her shopping bags full,
they weren't on wheels then that were easy to pull,
I know she was glad when her shopping was done,
and always complained that her bags weighed a ton.

When I compare the world of today,
the way people are, and the prices we pay,
give me the old days that I used to know,
the days of the penny world and the old Walthamstow.

Footsteps In The Snow

They were singing Christmas carols by the firelight glow,
my heart was filled with sadness as I stood there in the snow,
I listened with nostalgia as their voices rang out clear,
it seemed to touch my very soul as I wiped away a tear.
Sweet memories were returning on this still and silent night,
my feet and hands were frozen as the frost began to bite.
The moon was shining brightly, casting shadows all around,
the snow lay crisp and even as it sparkled on the ground.

I thought of all my family, and all my dearest friends,
of the happiness that used to be, which all too quickly ends.
I can plainly see their faces as I look back through the years,
their voices seem to haunt me and still echo in my ears.
We used to sit around the fire and sing love's old sweet songs,
now in the twilight of my life, that is where my heart belongs.
With the old piano playing. how happy we would be,
those good old fashioned Christmases that meant so much to me.

When you are with the ones you love, how fortunate you are
to have them all around you, and your friends from near and far.
Christmas is a time of joy, the season of good will,
it has always been close to my heart, and how I love them still.
I know that I shall never see those dear old times again,
but the memory of those happy days forever will remain.

It's strange how after all these years they still linger in your mind,
the Christmases you used to know that you have left behind.
Now I am all alone, I have no one to call my own,
God bless you all. as on my way I go,
though sadness fills my heart, as slowly I depart
and leave behind my footsteps in the snow.

How It Used To Be

(Childhood Days)

I look back to the days of those years long ago,
of those days in the thirties that I used to know,
memories draw near as in deep thought I gaze,
as I sit and think about my childhood days.
There were so many novelties sold in the shops,
I could go on for ever, the list never stops,
the prices were cheap, though wages were small,
here's just a few things in my mind I recall.
For only five bob, it would buy you a watch,
for twelve and a tanner, a bottle of Scotch,
fifty bob for a well tailored suit,
cheap at the price, from a shop of repute.
Fourpence a packet of ten cigarettes,
the more that I tell you, the better it gets.
Shoes you could buy, twelve and six for a pair,
one shilling and ninepence guaranteed their repair,
a snowfruit from Walls at a penny a time,
strawberry, vanilla, banana or lime,
tuppence it was for a lovely choc ice,
every lick was sheer bliss, for it tasted so nice.
To go to the pictures, it was such a treat,
for the price of a tanner you got a good seat.

I simply adored Fry's tuppenny crunch,
and all through the film, I would sit there and munch.
To wind up the evening, after the show,
a pennorth of chips, and home I would go.

Oh, the things I would do just to get a few bob,
I would wander the streets until I found a job,
I would get wooden boxes from under a stall,
and then, with Mum's chopper, I'd chop them up small,
then my mate and I, round the streets we would stroll,
selling our firewood, tuppence a bowl.
We used to sell horse dung at sixpence a pail,
every door that we knocked on we had a good sale,
trade was so good, we could not get enough,
the gardens did well on this jolly good stuff.

Bank Holiday Monday, no day could compare,
we would walk Lea Bridge Road 'til we got to the fair,
how I adored those bright painted swings,
the roundabouts, dodgems and all of those things.
My favourite show was the "Great Wall of Death",
as the bikes sped round, everyone held their breath,
three balls for tuppence were coconut shies,
each one you knocked down you took home for your prize.

We would ride on the trams for a shilling all day,
'twas the price of the ticket that we had to pay,
it was surprising how far you could go,
all over London, from our Walthamstow.
I remember first seeing the "R101"
as she sailed over London, beneath the bright sun,
it looked like a silver cigar in the sky,
what a wonderful sight as it slowly droned by;
that picture forever remains in my mind,
for never had I seen a thing of that kind.
What can they look back on, the kids of today,
compared with the thirties, what memories have
they?

When they grow up and have kids of their own,
what can they tell them of this world they have known?
Murders and muggings and threats of a war,
bleak is their future that they have in store.
I feel sorry to think that they'll never see
the times that we lived in—how it used to be.

Dreams Of Long Ago

There and back for three and six, what a time we had,
all the way to Ramsgate, with dear old Mum and Dad.
Singing on the chara, everyone was gay,
remarkable what you could do on such a meagre pay.
Stopping for a pint or two at the "Bull and Crown",
and have a dance before you leave to "Knees up Muvver Brown".

Dad rolled up his trousers and paddled in the sea,
Mum was sitting on the beach, drinking her cup of tea.
All the kids were happy as they played upon the sand,
we saw a Punch and Judy show and oh, it was so grand.

Several little donkeys, sixpence for a ride.
My Mum, she looked so funny that I laughed until I cried.
Dad took out his camera and tried to take a snap,
the donkey man stood patiently, he was a decent chap.

Penny for a cornet or a bar of Nestles choc,
tuppence for a great thick stick of Ramsgate peppermint rock.
All the people gathered around the cockle stall,
fourpence for a large plate, penny for a small.
Dad, he liked his jellied eels, how he enjoyed them so,
and after we had had our fill, then on our way we'd go.

As we strolled along the promenade and listened to the band,
I fell just like a millionaire, with a tanner in my hand.
Then we had a boat trip, far out on the sea,
the accordion was playing, and we all sang merrily.
Mum looked rather anxious as the boat began to rock,
then suddenly a great big wave came up and soaked her frock.
At the time it was so funny and the crowd began to roar,
but towards the end we'd had enough and were glad to see the shore.

We then made for the nearest pub, and as we tumbled in.
Dad bought himself a pint of draught and Mum a double gin.
A jolly good time and a happy day was had by one and all,
I look back with nostalgia as those memories I recall.
Those days have gone for ever, like my dear old Mum and Dad,
but they still live within my heart, all the good times that I've had.

Mick The Monkey

I love to sit quiet, and to be on my own,
to look back on the years that too quickly have flown,
I'm at peace with the world in my deep solitude,
especially when I'm in a nostalgic mood.
I relive the memories of sweet childhood days,
as I sit by the fire and into it gaze.
It's amazing the things that all pass through my mind
of those sweet yesterdays that I've now left behind.

I will always remember my dear brother Stan,
he paid me quite well for the errands I ran,
he always had plenty of money to spend,
his pocket was full, and became his best friend.
I remember one day, when I just had to stop
to look into the window of a local pet shop,
a little brown monkey attracted my eye,
and I thought at the time "What a nice pet to buy".
I hurried home quickly, and told brother Stan,
he said "Go and get it", and all the way back I ran,
I arrived at the shop, which was not very far,
and home came the monkey, with me in the car.

"He can be quite amusing, you know," said the man,
and the first thing it did was to piddle on Stan,
he gave him the money and off the man went,
we had all the time in the world to repent.
It took him some time before settling in,
and very quickly our hearts he did win,
we had him chained up, on a hook by the fire,
he amused us all night, and not once did he tire.

He embarrassed my sister to such an extent
that she knitted him trousers, and they were heaven sent,
it made her feel harassed when with her young man,
but he only laughed when she told brother Stan.
I do not wish to appear to sound crude,
but sometimes our Mickey could be very rude,
the things he got up to, I don't like to say,
and although he was scolded, he still had his way.

Mick always knew when the greengrocer came,
he would kick up a row. and was always the same,
he loved his banana and enjoyed every bite,
and he knew how to peel it, the dear little mite.

Mum kept her sideboard next to the recess,
she thought it was out of his reach was her guess,
one day Mum thought that our Mick was asleep,
and out of the room she did silently creep,
she hadn't been gone for five minutes or more,
when out came the groceries, all over the floor,
there was sugar, butter, biscuits and tea,
all mixed up together, in our Mickey's pee.
When poor Mum saw it, well she nearly died,
"Oh, you little bugger," she screamed and she cried,
he knew he'd done wrong, by the look on his face,
for the rest of that day, well he was in disgrace.

In the end, Mickey got too much for poor Mum,
she said he was making our house look a slum,
what with him messing all over the floor,
and the smell of him making our poor throats all sore.
Dad then decided that Mickey must go,
we were all very sorry, for we loved him so,
he went back to the shop and how my heart sunk,
and that was the end of our Mickey the monk.

God's Creatures

Can you imagine a world without love?
How empty and void it would be
with no creatures roaming the face of the earth,
in a world where they were born free.
For they are all part of God's kingdom,
and entitled to their full life's span.
not to be harassed and hunted,
to be tortured and killed by man.

They hunt the foxes from their lair
to be savaged by their hounds,

how exceedingly wicked man can be,
his cruelty knows no bounds.
They hunt and kill the harmless whale
from the depths of the deep blue sea,
do they know how it feels
when they club the poor seals
so viciously and callously?

The white rhino soon will become extinct
if something's not very soon done,
their numbers are dwindling day by day,
and soon there will be none.
The beasts of the jungle are such easy prey
as they're hunted from morning till dusk,
die tiger, the leopard for their valuable skins,
and the elephant for its tusk.

They put a bull into the ring,
half blinded by the sun,
then torture it unmercifully,
and they call that sport, and fun.
They taunt it till its mad with rage,
as they pierce it with the dart,
then with their hidden, sharpened sword
thrust deep into the heart.

They indulge in factory farming,
cram the creatures in small pens,
they never see the light of day
until their poor life ends.
Do they realise just how much they cause,
such suffering and pain,
to treat the creatures in this way,
just for their selfish gain?

The whole technique of life has changed
in this world that we once knew,
in this scientific modern age
which we are passing through.
I can't begin to tell you
just how sad it makes me feel
that all God's creatures of this earth
are subjected to this deal.

I hope that justice will be done
to the guilty, when life ends,
and they too suffer pain and fear,
as they've done to our dumb friends.
When they beg the Lord for mercy
for the wicked deeds they've done,
I hope they all get punished,
each and every one.

The Hospice

As you enter through the gates,
blessed Virgin Mary waits,
with uplifted arms in prayer,
for those in need of love and care.
Beautiful flowers adorn the ground
where utter peace is to be found,
sweet birds are the only sound,
the presence of God is all around.
There's an open book inside the hall,
on the table, by the wall,
above are clasped two hands in prayer
that pray for all those poor souls there.

No longer will they suffer
in agony or in pain,
for God will lead them by the hand
to His heavenly domain.
His mansion is an open door
where they will dwell for evermore
on His far and distant shore--
is not that worth waiting for?

In the Hospice, you will find
that everyone is sweet and kind,
they seem to give you peace of mind
for the loved ones you have left behind.
Hard worked hands, with angel faces,
who would want to take their places?
The dedication their heart embraces,

those merciful sisters of love.

As they silently glide through the ward,
always at hand when they are called,
patience and love is their reward,
these loving angels of the Lord.
There will always be an open door,
no matter if you're rich or poor,
whatever colour, whatever creed,
it is always there for those in need.

If you have the time to spare,
and in your heart you really care,
just offer up to God a prayer
for the love and kindness that's shown there.
God bless the sisters within these walls,
who are always there when duty calls,
now my story has been told,
I think they're worth their weight in gold.

The Thirties

They talk about the good old days, they say they were the best,
so let us analyse them, and put them to the test.
Back in the nineteen thirties. when I was just a lad,
oh! the hardship we endured for the little that we had.
Work was very hard to find, and wages — they were small,
you were very lucky if you had a job at all.
Conditions were extremely bad, you worked every hour God gave,
each factory was a sweat shop, and you were just the slave.
You had to be on time each day, or you were in disgrace,
there was always someone waiting there outside to take your place.
Constantly you lived in fear of losing your precious job,
and every hour you worked hard, all for a paltry bob.
If you did wrong and got rebuked, you dared not answer back,
for if you did, without a doubt, then you would get the sack.

Food was cheap and plentiful, but cupboards, they were bare,
many a tummy went without for the lack of cash to spare.

One half of the world was rich, the other half was poor,
and poverty reared its ugly head at almost every door.
There was many an ex-service man, standing in the gutter,
selling boxes of matches for their bread and butter.
Some would march around the street, playing in a band,
with haggard faces, and missing limbs, with outstretched cap in hand.
They fought and bled for England, and that was their reward,
those brave and gallant gentlemen, who were there when they were
called.

You would often hear a barrel organ playing in the street,
the poor old organ grinder, with the monkey at his feet.
The pawn shops did a roaring trade, women queued up at the door
with their bundles in their hand—oh, blessed were the poor.
There was, of course, the work house, that was the last resort,
institutions for their children, whom they could not support.
If you were really destitute you would go to the "R.O."
But precious little help you got, that's why many would not go.
They would send someone to see you, and the first thing that they said
was "Get rid of this, get rid of that," 'til all you had left was your bed.

I remember my poor mother, how she tried to make ends meet,
with all our hungry mouths to feed, and nothing much to eat.
She would wait upon the rag man with her bundle of old clothes
for a handful of small coppers, how she managed goodness knows.
She deserved a medal for the worry she went through,
as each day she would struggle to make her faggot stew.
We were not the only ones, there were thousands just like us,
but bravely they would struggle on with the minimum of fuss.
That's what it was really like, those days of long ago,
thank goodness they are over, except the memories that still flow.
That was the nineteen thirties, now it's nineteen eighty-four,
that's the end of my short story, what it felt like to be poor.

All Creatures Great And Small

If our dumb friends could only speak,
I wonder what they'd say?
I wonder what is in their minds.
What their thoughts are day by day?
In this thankless world we live in.
Full of selfishness and greed.
If the human race was more like them,
It would be rich indeed.

Why the wickedness and cruelty, the
suffering and pain?
God did not put them on this earth
For experimental gain.
They were given life to live,
The same as you and I,
Why should they be tortured.
To suffer and to die?

They were born to live in freedom,
I'm sure that's what God planned.
Not in fear of being hunted.
Or driven off their land.
Some species soon will be extinct
If something isn't done.
We've got to put a stop to it,
Or soon there will be none.

The guilty will be paid for this.
Remember, God sees all.
So let us try and to protect
All creatures, great and small.

A Touch Of Nostalgia

Happy memories I recall, when I was just a kid,
as I look back and reminisce on all the things I did.
Money, it was rather scarce, I did not have a lot,
but I was very happy with the little that I'd got.
Naturally, I must confess, I always needed more,
but with a shilling in my hand, how could you call me poor?
A tanner for the pictures, that was my week-end treat,
five Woodbines only tuppence, and my world became complete.

I fell in love with Myrna Loy and Dorothy Lamour,
they always seemed to touch my heart, in every film I saw.
I also liked James Cagney and I liked Lupino Lane,
and if the film was very good, I would see it through again.
Then up would rise the organ, and everyone would clap
and join in with the chorus, while their feet began to tap.
When the show was over, to the fish shop I would go
for my tuppenny and penn'orth I always enjoyed so.
The windows would be all steamed up. I remember it so well,
the comfort of the warmth inside, and the gorgeous savoury smell.
The bubbling fat hissed merrily and never seemed to stop,
I still recall the counter with its long, white wooden top.
As I walked slowly down the street and held them in my hand,
every mouthful was so good, and didn't they taste grand?
To think, with only threepence how rich you were indeed,
and know that it would always buy a satisfying feed.

Every' Sunday morning, we would listen for the bell,
round would come the muffin man, with lots of them to sell,
lovely buttered crumpets we would have for tea,
and a plate of shrimps or winkles, freshly from the sea.
Out would come a pack of cards, and everyone would play,
a ritual every Sunday, just to pass the time away.
Mother in the armchair, having a little nap,
the Sunday morning paper lying open on her lap.
Pussy sitting on the rug, warming by the fire.
Dad was dishing out the cards and never seemed to tire.

I loved to hear the wireless every Saturday night,
Flanagan and Allen would fill me with delight,

Formby on his banjo, how he made it ring,
Gracie Fields would give her song, and everyone would sing.
Max Miller cracked his funny jokes and oh, he was so good,
then came Gert and Daisy and little Georgie Wood.
Mum would get the supper, pease pudding and saveloys,
and that was only one of many, many joys.
After that we'd sit and talk, 'til Mum would droop her head,
and one by one we'd disappear, off up to our bed.
All that was in the thirties, now it's nineteen eighty-four,
and as I think about them, I realise I miss them more.
Those days have gone for ever, but still they linger on,
whatever's happened to the world today,
where did it all go wrong?

My Mother

There was a sweet old lady
who meant all the world to me.
I will never see her dear, sweet face again,
her life was one long struggle
every hour of the day
and never once did I hear her complain.
She did not have a lot,
she was the one the world forgot,
she had nothing good that she could call her own,
all her clothes were second hand,
and the shoes in which she'd stand,
though she worked her poor, bent fingers to the bone.

'Twas no means an easy feat
as she tried to make ends meet,
for she never had a penny to her name,
with the little she had spare,
she made sure our food was there,
and throughout her life she always was the same.
When there was little on the shelf.
she would go without herself,
and fortune always seemed to pass her by,

she would try to find a way
how to feed us every day,
and wipe her wrinkled brow, and gently sigh.

She was one in a million and to us worth more than gold,
to bring us up was not an easy task,
if there was anything we needed
she would do her level best,
for all we had to do was just to ask.
There could never be another
like my dearest, darling mother,
her unselfish love we never could repay,
for no one ever knew the hard times that she went through---
no wonder that her poor hair turned to grey.

For her, life was no fun, for her work was never done,
and she did not have a moment left to spare;
she was always on the go as she darted to and fro,
and exhausted she would slump into her chair.
Now we all miss her so much, and her soft and gentle touch,
and we know one day our time has got to come;
in my heart I always pray that we'll meet again some day
and all be reunited with dear Mum.
The best friend we ever had is now with dear old Dad,
as they lie together peaceful in their grave,
never was there so much owed for the love that they both showed,
the best parents in this life God ever gave.

When We Were Kids

Do you remember those long years ago
when I used to call you my queen?
You were my love, and only love,
the prettiest girl I had seen.
We used to go courting, and I was so proud,
I told all the kids you were mine,
your eyes were as bright as the stars in the sky,
and your lips were so sweet and divine.

We were always together. I was madly in love,
you were the light of my life,
I remember when I placed a rose in your hair,
and I dreamed one day you'd be my wife.

Hand in hand we would scamper, on our way to school,
across the valley and dell,
I can still hear the echo that rings in my ears,
the sound of the village school bell.
Time seemed to stand still when we were both kids,
every hour seemed just like a day,
gold was the sunshine that shone from the sky,
when you were my Queen of the May.

As we grew older, our life seemed to change,
and somehow we drifted apart,
I cannot tell you what it did to me,
especially my poor wounded heart.
Now the years have rolled by, like the clouds in the sky,
and I yearned for those days that had passed,
how cruel life can be, when fate holds the key,
to the future that destiny cast.

I joined the forces, and went overseas,
it was during the time of the war,
then I got wounded, and when I opened my eyes,
I could not believe what I saw.
There you were, leaning over my bed,
your face I could plainly see,
you were holding my hand, as you did days gone by,
and fate gave you again back to me.

We came back to England, and soon we were wed,
'twas the happiest day of my life,
I never knew that my dream would come true,
and at last, darling, you were my wife.
It seems so long ago since we were both kids,
those sweet, happy memories remain,
if I had the chance to relive all those days,
I would live them all over again.

Hard Times

No money for the rent on Monday,
I need it to buy coal,
it's bread and cheese for dinner,
now father's on the dole.
He hasn't any money, so the rent will have to wait.
he can take it out on the knocker,
and put it on the slate.
I will have to go to "Uncle's"
and pop Dad's Sunday best,
though going to the pawn shop
is something I detest

Times are getting harder, with every passing day,
there's not much in the larder,
no wonder I am grey.
One day when I was desperate,
I went to the "R.O.",
I sat there like a lemon
while they darted to and fro.
They sent a man to see me,
he came into my home,
I could not get a penny
while I had a gramophone.
He said if I got rid of it
he would see what could be done,
I said in no uncertain terms
to "go and take a run."
It's that first time that I've asked for help,
I have never been before,
it seems there's one law for the rich
and one law for the poor.

I am waiting on the rag man,
he should be here today,
I have made him up a bundle,
I hope well he will pay,
being short of money, it does get on your wick.
Dad likes his tripe and onions,
and loves his spotted dick.

If I could only win the pools,
I wouldn't arf go to town,
but I can't pick out the winners,
it's my draws that let me down.

My clothes are getting shabby,
there's a big hole in my shoe,
although I've put in cardboard,
the water still seeps through...
To think that times are still as hard
in nineteen thirty-five,
for every little thing I want,
I've always had to strive.
I wonder what it will be like
in nineteen eighty-four?
Will we all be better off,
or will we still be poor?
Governments, they come and go,
but times are still the same,
we struggle on, though hope is gone,
and the poor still get the blame.

Where Peace Is Gold

I love to go fishing, down by the old stream,
it has always been one of my joys,
time seems to stand still as I sit there and dream,
far away from life's turmoil and noise.
Peace is the scene, by the lush fields of green,
all you hear is the song of the birds,
the hum of the bee. and sweet tranquillity,
it is hard to express it in words.

I hook on my bait and with patience, I wait,
as I sit there on my little stool,
I am full of good cheer, whilst my bottle of beer
floats in the water to cool.
You cannot compare the peace you find there,

some people just don't understand,
as the soft waters flow, all my cares seem to go,
as I sit there, with rod in my hand.

The graceful white swan comes gliding along,
with its cygnets that follow behind,
the prettiest picture that you've ever seen,
is all part of the joy that you find.
Gold is the silence that is all around,
as into the water I gaze,
watching the movement of my bobbing float,
as the fish swim around in the braes.

How often I wish, as I sit there and fish,
to hook up a beautiful bream,
it takes all my skill, and I get such a thrill,
then I place it back into the stream.
It is hard to predict if it's the right spot you've picked,
there are times when I don't get a bite,
I can sit there for hours in the sunshine and showers,
till the daytime turns into the night.

We have all heard the story of the fisherman's glory,
the big one that just got away,
how his bending rod shook, it went off with the hook,
it was always the tale of the day.
There is nothing quite like it, whatever you do,
I must say it's a wonderful sport,
as I sit there in bliss, not a day would I miss,
if it's only a cold that I caught.

If you seek paradise, you may take my advice,
for this hobby is simply divine,
get your rod and your reels and you'll know how it feels
when a fish tugs away on your line.
It becomes your best friend, when you have time to spend,
every word that I say is so true,
I will end with this wish, may you catch a big fish,
and jolly good luck to you.

When n God Took You From Me

I did not know how lonely life could be,
sad is my heart, now you have gone from me,
times have not changed, my love will ever be,
always forever, till life's eternity.

Sweet was my world, I loved you every day,
now you are gone, each night for you I pray,
that we will meet again on God's far distant shore,
and once again I'll hold you evermore.

I worshipped you with body and with soul,
cruel is this life, where death must take its toll,
my severed heart no longer can be whole,
till we meet again and hand in hand we'll stroll.
Only God knows how much you meant to me,
parting from you, somehow I could not see,
I did not know how dark my world could be,
my heart was broken when God took you from me.

There Was A Time

I was born in the borough of Walthamstow in nineteen twenty-four,
my parents were of working class, and consequently poor.
It was on the eighth of February, the day that I was born
into a world of poverty, on a cold and snowy morn.
My Dad believed that our dear Lord would provide them in their need,
but the only gift that he received was another mouth to feed.
I had three brothers and a sister, all older than myself,
five little ragamuffins was the total of their wealth.
Though my father had a sweet shop, he was in financial straits,
the meagre profit that he got did not even pay his rates.
No matter what my father did, he could not make it pay,
so in the end they both agreed it was best to move away.
We ended up in Leyton, in a tiny three-roomed flat,
although the rent was reasonable, there was no room to swing a cat.

There was another family, occupied the flat below,
Mr. and Mrs. Pavey, who were very nice to know.
They also had three children, two daughters and a son,

Winnie, Cyril and Vera, whose friendship we soon won.
We got on well together, in every kind of way,
the garden was our playground, where we always used to play.

I remember quite distinctly the man who lived next door,
even today I shudder, with the horror that I saw.
He used to grab a chicken, and to his drainpipe tie,
then he would slit the poor thing's throat and watch it slowly die.
Oh! the way it used to flap its wings, and the noise it used to make,
I would stand there simply horrified and my heart would nearly break.
Its funny how those little things still linger in your mind,
I was convinced at five years old this world was so unkind.

My father had a crystal set and we dared not make a sound,
with his earphones on he would fiddle about for a station to be found.
Many a time I got a clout for making too much noise,
all through that blinkin' crystal set, I could not play with my toys.
My mother kept a penny cane hanging on the indoor line,
and often used to whack us, and then we'd start to whine.
We must have been a handful, for my poor old Mum and Dad,
the worry that we caused them, on top of what they had.
We had more clouts than ha'pennies almost every day,
if one of us stepped out of line, 'twas the price we had to pay.
Although my Dad was rather strict, he taught us right from wrong,
to respect our elders was his rule, that he insisted on.

We were made to run the errands for the people down our street,
sometimes we got a ha'penny when our chores were all complete.
My Mum would give me a basin, and she would say to me,
"Here's tuppence, go to Gunner's for some cracked eggs for our tea".

I would run down to the Baker's Arms as fast as I could go,
it still lives on in memory, all those times I used to know.
Little things I still recall, when I was just a lad,
those holidays at Canvey, with my dear old Mum and Dad.
We always had a caravan, not far from the sea,
just one week out of every year, was such a luxury.
I look back with nostalgia to those days that I have seen,
when we were glad to have a meal of bread and margarine.
I have often had condensed milk spread thickly on my bread,
that was an added extra treat, before I went to bed.
There's another thing I still recall, I can see it now so clear,
Mum used to plunge a red hot poker in her glass of beer.

It fascinated me so much, when I used to stand and stare,
I doubt if you would see today this thing that is so rare.
All these things took place when Mum and Dad were in their prime,
a little sadness fills my heart as I write "There Was A Time".

A Tender Thought

Today's my mother's birthday, and I'm feeling rather sad,
her love will always live within my heart,
our dear Lord, He thought it best that it was time for her to rest,
and from this world an angel did depart.
Her memory I hold dear as I brush away a tear,
to me it was a very bitter blow,
I was with her till the end, to me she was a friend,
when God took from me the one that I loved so.

There are times I feel her near, in my mind her voice I hear,
if I could only see her dear, sweet face again,
the feelings that I feel is a wound no one can heal,
I did not know that it could bring me so much pain.
I was looking through her things, at her trinkets and her rings,
I distinctly heard a voice within me say,
"Grieve no more, my dear for me, from my body I am free,
God has taken all my suffering away."

I still find it hard to bear, knowing Mum's no longer there,
my life seems empty now without her love,
she did so much for me, in my thoughts she'll
always be,
as I pray for her dear soul to God above.
It seems hard to realise that those two dear, smiling eyes,
no longer will they smile again at me,
it is only in my dreams that her sweet face gently beams,
all I have left now is her sweet memory.
I place these flowers upon her grave, for all the love to me she gave,
as I pray one day that we shall meet again.
I am sure she knows I'm there, and that she can
hear my prayer
as she rests in peace in our dear Lord's domain.

Locket Of Love

There's a strand of Mum's hair in the locket I wear,
when I open it I feel so sad,
on one side there is a photo of Mum,
on the other a photo of Dad.
I treasure it deeply, with all of my heart,
as I handle it fondly, with care,
I subconsciously finger it when I'm alone,
and somehow I feel they are there.
No one could know how I miss them so,
and many a tear I have shed,
the angels above send me down their sweet love,
as I kneel at the foot of my bed.
Each night I pray that there'll come a day
when we are together again,
till then, my dears, I must fight back my tears,
as your sweet, tender memories remain.

Heavenly Father

Sweet is this life that God hath given me,
sweet is His love. His love forever be,
open my eyes, please Lord that I may see,
and show me the way, so I may follow Thee.

Open my heart, let it radiate with love,
open my ears to the voices from above,
lead me on to the path of righteousness,
and lighten my darkness to joy and happiness.
When my life expires and I hear You calling me,
open the door and let my spirit free,
with open arms I know You'll welcome me.
so I may dwell for evermore with Thee.

When I Lost You

I lost the love that you gave me,
a love so tender and true,
my pleading heart could not save me
the heartbreak of losing you.
I lost those passionate kisses,
all over somebody new,
I lost a part that once was my heart,
when I lost you.

In a beautiful garden of roses,
each one reminds me of you,
was it my tears that filled my eyes,
or was it the morning dew?
I lost the happiness that we shared,
I lost the joy I once knew,
but the one thing that hurt me the most of all
was when I lost you.

For Richer For Poorer

The wedding cars were on their way, the sky was blue above,
it was a very special day for two people so in love.
The house was in a turmoil as they hurried to and fro,
the bridegroom, he showed signs of nerves as the strain began to show.
He fumbled with his collar as he tried to fix his tie,
his Dad gave him a helping hand, and Gran began to cry.
"Now don't you start," his father said. "We can do without all that,"
while mother stood beside the glass, adjusting her new hat.
"I can't help it," sniffled Gran, as she dabbed away a tear
"Now come on, mother," said his Mum, "the cars will soon be here."
She said to Gran, "Before we go, have you been to you know where?
You know what happened on the coach to Weston-super-Mare."
The best man, he looked anxious as he glanced down at his watch,
while Dad was at the sideboard, pouring out a double Scotch.
"Good luck, good health, God bless you both," his father said with pride,
with glasses raised, they drank a toast to the bridegroom and the bride.
"Oh, my gawd," shrieked poor old Gran, 'look at my bleedin' hat,"
the dog was playing with the feather, on the front room mat.

Dad whispered in the bridegroom's ear as he took him to one side,
"I know about the birds and bees," the bridegroom he replied.
His father gave a little grin and winked his eye at Mum,
who looked at father with distaste as she slowly sipped her rum.
Then there was an argument when Grandma spilt her drink,
it went all over father's suit and the whisky made it stink.
"How can I go to church like this?" the bridegroom's father cried,
there was a rat-tat on the door as the cars drew up outside.
They all arrived at church on time, it was a lovely day,
a shaft of sunlight filtered through as they all knelt down to pray.
The bride looked really beautiful as she walked down the aisle,
with her bouquet of deep red roses, and her face a radiant smile.
The organ played a lovely hymn and everyone joined in,
the vicar turned to the best man and said "Have you the ring?"
"Who giveth this woman to this man?" is what the vicar said,
"I do," said her father, with a face of crimson red.
The service went extremely well, and everyone was pleased,
the bridegroom sighed with great relief, his tension now was eased.
They congregated in the yard to have their photos done,
the weather, it was beautiful, warm was the friendly sun.

They went to the reception, and everything was fine,
they drank their health in whisky, the vicar ginger wine.
My father made a funny speech, our sides they ached with laughter,
he turned to the best man and said, "You can make yours after."
He said "Let's be upstanding and let us drink a toast.
Here's to the happy couple, the ones I love the most.
May their troubles all be little ones, that's what I'd like to see.
If he finds that he can't manage it, he can always call on me."
He gulped another whisky down, and almost came to grief,
it must have gone the wrong way down, and out shot his false teeth.

Both families got together, and everyone was gay,
everyone took to the floor when the band began to play.
They did the Hokey Cokey and a Knees Up Mother Brown,
and what an uproar that it caused when Grandma's drawers fell down.
She didn't know where to put her face, she didn't half feel daft,
in front of all those people too, and everybody laughed.
The whisky flowed like water and soon went all the gin,
then someone sang a dirty song, and everyone joined in.
Mum went to the toilet, someone told her it was free,
she caught the vicar with his trousers down, sitting on the W.C.

She said it was a nightmare, she was shocked at what she saw.
Dad said it was the vicar's fault, he should have locked the door.
The vicar drank the couple's health, he did not stay for long,
he must have felt embarrassed at the whispering that went on.
Everyone enjoyed themselves, it ended all too soon.
the bride and groom both slipped away to start their honeymoon.

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