

Silly Poems  
and other appalling  
Stories & Songs

*James Barry*

A collection of silly verse written mainly for performing at pubs, folk festivals or  
where ever someone would listen.

James Barry © 1982 -2001

## Mobile Moron

I slammed the train door and fell in the seat  
At last I had the weight from off my feet  
I now had an hour when I didn't need to use my brain  
No conversations, decisions or any such strain  
We moved off, but just as I started my rest  
I heard the tell-tell bleeps of buttons being pressed  
I braced myself, we all did,  
our peace was not going to last  
And then he started with a hundred decibel blast.....  
"TOM! HI! DANNY here .... yes its been a while  
Just thought I'd call you on the old mobile  
Did you get the fax I sent today ?  
Direct from this old hand-held by the way  
Oh double drat, what a pain  
Yes, I guess you're right – read the old instructions again  
What did it say? I'll have to tell you as it failed  
It was to inform you, old chap - you'd been e-mailed  
.... Yes? A couple a days ago .... Oh! What a flop!  
It's the first thing I sent from the old lap-top  
No! It's new of course! 800 meg, graphics go berserk  
Yes! I can see your point - if it doesn't actually work  
What did the e-mail say? Well, just - hello  
How are things? How are you? You know  
Why didn't I phone? I can see where you're coming from  
The old dog and bone, yup, I understand that Tom  
Here, well, wife's gone, but the Secretary's doing alright  
Think I'll give her another rise after the other night  
(Hah hah hah!)  
Am I on the train? Yes, how did you guess  
Other people here? .... well .... yes!  
Really! .... Do you think so?  
No, I suppose I just phoned to say hello  
Of course old chap, that's not too hard  
I'll put all the news in the old Christmas card  
Just make a note of the snail-mail address for that  
Hello, Hello, Blast! Funny, signals ok and batteries aren't flat?"

## Lottery

“And the last ball out is... is... number fourteen  
That is the tenth time this year it has been seen”  
*I should have had that number, I can see that now*  
*There must be a system here, but where and how*  
*How can I win, beat this national lottery*  
*With all them millions there must be some for me*  
*That’s what I said and this was his reply!* “You can try  
And even double the number of tickets that you buy  
But I personally beat the system another way  
It’s very clever, radical and an alternative style of play  
It’s not a method, I expect you will consider  
But I can assure you, it’s one guaranteed to deliver  
You get a card each week and as normal you fill it in  
Then in front of the machine, rip it up and throw it in the bin  
Keep your money, and gorge yourself on fags  
Booze or chocolate, cream cakes, dirty mags  
I don’t care, just spend it and have some fun  
It’s better than dreaming that one-day you won  
Won millions, yes millions, but millions of what?  
Letters through your door asking for the lot  
Friends wanting a holiday, a car or drink at the bar  
And as far as they are concerned you are now a local star  
You’ll be hounded by the press until you buy that country estate  
The one with the big high fence to keep you in and burglars at the gate  
There you’ll have time to drown in an Olympic sized pool  
Of vodka, bored, lonely, sad, with everything but nothing at all  
The only remaining friend you’ll have that doesn’t ask for a share  
Will be the guard dogs you now need to take with you everywhere!  
So put 10p in corner shop’s forgotten, dusty, rusty charity tin  
It will clear your consciences and OK I know you can’t win  
But invert your thinking – you can’t lose  
And 90p is still just about enough (in my sort of pubs)  
for an ‘alf pint of booze!”

Dec 98

## Manners

Mum & Dad taught me good ways right since I was a baby  
Pleases and thank you and opening doors for a lady  
Politeness and pleasantries were important to learn  
Not to be rude or speak out of turn  
They said "Remember this advice that we'll give you.  
There's no excuse for bad manners what ever you do"  
My works pretty dull, I don't mend people who go wrong  
Or fight to keep endangered species where they belong  
It's trivial office but the Boss still gets in a mood  
And if I get the forms wrong, he's ever so rude  
He treats us like dirt never please or a ta  
But there's no excuse for bad manners who ever you are  
I love sport on TV, I can watch it all day  
And normally do when the wife goes away  
But when the losers are interviewed, I think it's a shame  
When they give one of the officials the blame  
They are questioning the integrity of the referee  
There's no excuse for bad manners how ever famous you be  
I went to an expensive restaurant the other night  
All was polished and posh and neat, all of it right  
But one arrogant bloke didn't seem to know how to behave  
He treated the waiter as his own personal slave  
I know he was the customer but still  
There's no need for bad manner even if you're paying the bill  
Sundays I'm off so I try and put up me feet  
I know I'm a slob and don't keep things neat  
I always mean to clear up though I sometime forgets  
But you'd think it was the end of the world the way she frets  
She'll scream and blaspheme and is a real nag  
"There's no excuse to be rude" I say "You ugly old bag!"

Oct 99

## The Enigma

Natives indulge the soporific sunshine solution  
Eyes deceive, to me the green man weaves again  
Until the glass ceiling shatters the window dimension  
You are there, are you there? I know what you must say  
But do you breath my words, there in your mind is doubt  
But for your sanity you must say. "What is this really about?"  
"I don't know" I'll reply "I made it all up just now on the spot"  
Riddley random rubbish for its all a joke, I've just made up the lot  
Big posh long-winded words, I heard some intelligent people using  
Combined with corny concepts to make it all sound all too confusing  
I've found the less it all means, the more other people find it intriguing  
Then suddenly somebody who's read it starts telling me how I am feeling  
I agree of course, I mean some of their ideas are fascinating and very good  
And rather weird, but I can not dig my mind that deep, but I do wish I would  
To finish their explanation and give a conclusion to my poem takes quiet a while  
We depart and I wonder if their analysis includes why I give them a departing smile

## Teenagers!

I have a step-daughter - she has just turned sixteen  
Our relationship is not the best it has ever been  
During the week we are too busy to squabble and fight  
But there is always a flash point every Saturday night  
When it is so late that some of the family are watching the clock  
They hear milk bottles scatter and a rattle in the lock  
Then a barking voice cracks the street's quiet midnight bliss  
These immortal words *"And what time do you call this?  
Look at you! My God you're so drunk - for heaven's sake!  
We went through this last week, how much can we take!  
Look at Mother, she has had no idea where you've been.  
Think of her for once and not yourself, I mean  
It is the same every weekend. Don't you realise we worry!"*

That is what she always says, but I do say I'm sorry!

Sep 97

### Now we've had six

Halfway up the stairs is the stair on which I slip  
There isn't any other stair that has so big a rip  
I end on my bottom, when I'm going to the top  
I must change the carpet or this drinking I must stop  
And all sorts of funny things go through my mind  
Is it my perception or the state of me I find

Halfway up the stairs is the stair on which I trip  
I always lose my footing and I do a total flip  
I'm going to the top but I end on my bottom  
Is it that I'm drunk or the carpet is so rotten  
I think of all the funny stuff for which I am inclined  
I know they make me happy, but will they make me blind?

Halfway up the stairs - no I've lost my train of thought  
Now I think I've had a few - thinking is so fraught  
And all sorts of - no that's not the line that's next  
Being not so sober makes simple things complex  
And all sorts of ..... no this still isn't right  
I think I'll pass-out here instead, good night

Feb 98



## Glancing Eyes

Have you noticed how some turn their heads when  
they start to laugh  
And enjoy a good joke with their other half  
On whom do your eyes glance when you start to smile?  
On who's face do they land and wait a while?  
Wait until a reciprocal feeling is received  
And you're warm and happy inside or may be relieved  
Or is it your reaction that catches you out  
You were laughing with them - Quick look about  
Who saw you giving everything away  
You don't know, it happened while your  
eyes were going astray  
So the next time you laugh and get that impulse too  
You should be looking at who's looking at you  
Then work out if the're checking up on your distraction  
Or if it's a pleasant glance and their natural reaction  
By which time you'll be so confused at working it out  
You'll have forgotten what you were first smiling about  
And that is the greatest give-away of guilt you'll ever see  
On a face that's worried it's been looking where it  
shouldn't be!

## The Awakening

Listen, I hear space between any sound  
Perfect moments, silence all around  
I hold, smell and touch, this thin slice of time  
Empty, nothing - everything, and all mine  
For in such a short while it will invert  
A snapping, snarling noise my ears will hurt  
Like a cat scratching, hissing defending her young  
A foul growling, scowling, howling from one  
With teeth that spit, gnashing to and fro  
An eagle holding its lair from predatory foe  
Or a cobra waiting to jump, biting the hand from which it feeds  
No point protesting, no kindness, no point in pleads  
Here is a wild animal released from a trap, the rage  
How dare I, yes me, how dare I rattle her cage  
But not yet, for now all is still  
Quiet, calm, so tranquil just until  
I advance and position the tea in her breakfast cup  
*“Morning darling step-daughter – it’s time to wake up“*

Jun 99

## TV Pets

These days I have very little time to watch TV  
But each time I sit down and switch on it seems to me  
Every flaming early evening programme is all about bloody pets!  
Their tales and trials and the rescuers, wardens and vets  
It all started with seeing the Harmsworth Hospital at work  
But now there's a new show every week, its all gone berserk  
I know why, it's cheap to produce, so I suppose it's no wonder  
Who's that chap who presents them, that old git from down-under  
I bet he hates those peeing, fur balls with gnashing teef  
That end up with some palatial house, I mean good grief  
If it was a person off the street who they were trying to re-home  
Would they get as many people dashing for the phone  
No, but stick on some bit of vermin and there's a rush  
What that bloke's name? Did pictures with a 6" paint brush  
What gets me is they mainly feature the stories where they don't die  
I want to see reality here but they don't even try!  
Notice when asking for help, they have that soft tinkly piano music  
And you dial some expensive telephone number - it makes me sick  
But I'm alone, because half the country phones wanting this bunny  
If we all didn't take it so seriously, it might be rather funny  
You have some wooden moron from the RSPCA  
Look to camera with a fat cat or rat with a bandage & starts to say  
"You can help twinkle?" And to cue it starts to whine  
And next we hear the calls are jamming the phone line  
This is dumb, cheap, simple, easy budget television  
For some dumb, cheap, simple people with limited vision  
But be warned in a decade or two that little squawk  
Will be digested by computers and we'll hear animals talk  
Then will we all consider them so obliging when  
They answer us back just like today's obstinate children!

Aug 98

## The Dome

*Dad! Dad! Is that the Millennium bug there – on TV*  
No Son! That's the Dome at Greenwich. *It looked like a bug to me*  
*It's a bit weird Dad. It ain't got any windows?*  
*I hope they've got the tent pegs in alright for when the wind blows*  
*What's it for? What's inside? What's it all about?*

It's a surprise or nobody knows, well that's quite a lot of doubt  
But what ever it's going to be, it's going to be really great  
They are spending millions and millions. We're told we can't wait  
It's all because soon it will be the year two thousand  
And it's the centre of the celebrations this country has planned  
*Yeah it's Jesus' big birthday isn't it? So is it all for him & his Dad?*

Ah no Lad, it's not really about that, which is a bit sad

It's not so much about the world's creation

More about the two thousand years of civilization

*Mum says we're not civilized letting all them people live on the street*

*May be that dome is a home for them people*

*- core that would be neat*

No! It is more a place where you'll see what the future will be  
How much better life is going to be in the next century  
How gadgets and things will make a dream world in future years

*So it's full of scientists working on good ideas*

*To help make everything better for everybody everywhere*

No they aren't actually doing any work inside there

It's just trying to tell us how we can look forward to tomorrow

Do you understand now? *Yes I think so*

*Is it anything to do with that National Lottery*

Yes it is Son, they have provided most of the money

*I guessed that 'cos yesterday I heard Mum say*

*The lottery is all about people wasting money away*

*And dreaming their future is going to be better than today!*

Jan 99

## Hell Must be a Very Crowded Place

Many years ago my Mum thought it might be good to drag me to Church  
We sat under the pulpit from where this vicar would lurch  
He bellowed out the bible from his lungs and his heart  
Explaining to his congregation what kept us Christians apart  
It was all a bit heavy for us as sort of beginners  
He told us that the rest of the world was full of sinners  
And when they died these awful people were  
banished below without trace  
Wow I thought, if he's right,  
Hell must be a very crowded place

I could understand the bit about evil and good  
And how all the baddies go to Hell – and so they should  
But only Christians going to Heaven, how mean  
I remembered all the nice foreign people on telly I'd seen  
All of those on the Blue Peter expeditions every year  
Every one going to Hell, that wasn't very nice to hear  
A bit selfish I thought as this preacher pronounced his case  
But if he's right, Hell must be a very crowded place

That was a very long time ago but I remembered it the other day  
When I heard that Canterbury chap talking, and what did he say  
The same thing, all the competition goes to Hell and damn-nations  
Not very good I thought for our international relations  
And what about some of us Britons in this multicultural society  
All seemed a bit in the past and a little too much piety  
Would he say that to somebody from a mosque - I mean to their face  
But if he's right, Hell must be a very crowded place

I can understand the robbers and thieves and the everyday thugs  
And of course the burglars and murderers and them dealing in drugs  
I was never sure about being quiet while eating your food  
I think my parents made that up, same about being rude  
But now a sweet gentle Mother in Bangladesh, she's a sinner too  
Not because she's bad, no she's backed the wrong horse, a Hindu  
That's not very PC these days Archbishop,  
judging somebody by their race  
But if he's right, Hell must be a very crowded place

Jun 99

## The Foul Weather Barrier System Solution

Before I departed this evening I was alert enough to check  
the weather forecast

There is a depression over the channel and the rain is coming in fast  
So I was sensible enough to wear my new high altitude four-season outer  
protective shell

What is that exactly? I can see you are interested, it's easy to tell  
Iso I'll tell you – t's made from a single piece of totally breathable Gore-Tex  
that's 7oz weight so it's impossible to rip

Secured with a dual strength, double ended, high tensile, chrome plated zip

On the front we have two extra large accessory carrying receptacles

Or 'pockets' as they are referred to by indoor-type, ignorant fools

The waist band cord is kernmantle construction like the best climbing ropes

With a whistle attached for attracting attention on the mountain slopes

The hood is wired rimmed, designed for total protection while leaving  
maximum clear view

Manufactured with a lining and attached with flexible silicon  
100% waterproof glue

I was informed it exploits research from the space programme, though which  
bits I'm not really sure

And of course it has triple rolled laser sealed seams as used in service  
in the gulf war

For night visibility it has a closed cell reflective strip across the back  
It is a high technology foul weather barrier system solution, so please do what  
my wife does and call it an anorak!

Oct 99

## 'assocks

"I come from Hassocks". He looked confused. "That's bad,  
How does a place get a name that's that sad?"

"Build on tufts of grass that looked like those Church things you  
put your knees on"

"So 'ang on, its got a crap name for a \*\*\*\* reason!"

"Sorry, but the locals say that's the historic tale  
Now why's this place called Skelmersdale?"

"Do you know, ain't got a clue  
Suppose that's a pretty crap name too!"

## The Last Words

There once was a mountaineer who was so bold  
But who's judgement had slipped now he was getting old  
On one climb he led  
The last words he said  
"Of course this old trusty rope will hold!"

Now a sailor who travelled the sea  
Put his legs in the water up to his knee  
The last words he said  
Just before he was dead  
"Shark here! Don't worry, he wont fancy me"

Now a Tory was elected a new MP  
And walked with the public while on TV  
The last words he said  
Before he went red  
"Hello Mary, gosh your baby looks just like me"

Now Jack is a mate with a very iffy lorry  
The state of it was extremely sorry  
As a trunk road he fled  
The last words that he said  
"The Brakes, there ok - not a worry"

There was a young builder called Steed  
While on site stopped at a notice to read  
The last words he said  
As a brick reshaped his head  
"Hard Hat must be worn - Ah no need"

I knew a silly man and I'll tell you why  
He wired his own house up all DIY  
The last words that he said  
As he got into his bed  
"Without this electric blanket I'd just Die!"



## King Canut

Good historians will tell you with no dispute  
Of the mis-reporting of that chap King Canut  
The truth about his adventure on the beach  
Is very different from the one at school they teach  
Tired of excessive compliments from servants at his side  
He said "I bet you think I could even hold back the tide"  
"Of course you can" they replied "You wonderful King"  
"For you can command most anything"  
So to add some perspective and prove his mortality  
He sat on the beach and gave commandments to the sea  
He demonstrated to his subjects there was a limit to his rule  
But the tale was given some spin & history recorded him as a fool!

## What Marriage

My goodness, I've just noticed the date  
It's our wedding anniversary, I forgot, Oh great!  
But on reflection, why should I care?  
I mean what's left, what's really there?  
We used to whisper sweet nothings and think it was funny  
Now we scream and shout as we argue mainly over money  
Don't misunderstand, I don't regret the marriage scene  
She's a great cook and the house is always really clean  
We've just drifted apart and now do such different things  
Nobodies fault, just happened, I suppose it's what time brings  
I remember that wonderful warm day, all so full of hope  
We were young in love and convinced we could cope  
I never forget, those memories of love will always stay  
And to think that wedding was exactly a year ago today

Oct 99

## Rally

Six, five, four, the amber light starts to glow  
Three, two, one, green yes go, go, go!  
Straight, then a left ninety in second gear  
Power off, on reverse camber, don't over steer  
Up, up the hill, maximum power watch the red line  
Hard right, snake left and right again still on the climb  
What's that, a hazard, yes a bloody spectator  
Right in the road, we'll report that later  
Into the trees, watch the sheer drop on the side  
Come on, come on, half way round now don't let her slide  
A vehicle, its crashed, can I get round, yes there's a way  
Hey, that's good news, it's Colin McRae  
Down into third and crash through the ford  
Up over the bank on maximum thrust, the throttle's floored  
What a stunning lap, could be a record but seconds tick on  
WHAT.... the screens ... where's it gone  
Suddenly I'm looking at a TV that's grey and blank  
I turn she has the playstation plug in hand, I've her to thank  
"Mum, how dare you!" *"Only 6 hours a day dear,  
you have been told"*  
*"And I've been calling you for 20 minutes, your tea's  
getting cold!"*

Oct 99

## Road Rage

So there we both are driving into town  
With the co-pilot there so I'm keeping the speed down  
When some bugger pulls out on this silly little scooter  
I slam on my brakes, swear and toot my hooter  
*"There's no need for that you know, not at your age  
What do they call it – yes road rage"*  
Until that moment I had remained quite calm  
But comments like that press my self defence alarm  
"Oh I see, so it's OK for him to act like a prat on the road  
Breaking every rule and guideline in the highway code  
Risk his life and mine by going berserk  
Waste NHS time and ruin my new paint work  
But I'm not ever allowed to use my horn to warn him I'm here  
Or make my objections to him plain and clear  
And I start telling her about an incident the other day  
When at the next junction I almost forget to give way  
But I stopped, so no need for that Cavalier to  
give me a long horn blow  
"Don't be so bloody aggressive" I shouted through the window  
*"Now he thinks you have got road rage too"*  
"Look I don't need this travelling with you  
Will you just stop it, stop all this lip  
Keep your gob shut 'till the end of our trip"  
For the remainder of the journey it was quiet 'till we got there  
"OK madam" I said "£5.60 please, that's the fare"  
She paid and without a word or a tip she was gone  
And I switched the 'For hire' sign back on.

Jun 99

## Rest in Pieces

What was that? Never mind I'm awake now, what a sleep!  
I don't know, one minute I'm counting sheep  
And the next, well you know, it seems  
That wonderful crazy things happen in ones dreams  
All is up-side-down but you still comprehend the pleasure you are about to  
gain  
And then at the critical moment you always wake up again  
What is the time? Oh no! It is only quarter past four  
I really could do with some extra kip but I know I won't  
get anymore  
I'll just have to exist here, bored, but still  
At least I've less than an hour to kill  
For then I'll be forced to stir myself and come alive  
Because I'm allowed to leave this dull office once it's gone five!

Sep 99

## My Turn to Sing

Wait a minute, I thought it was my turn to sing  
That's his fourth tonight, I hope he breaks a string  
The time he takes playing with his pegs, it will be soon  
Five minutes before a spot it takes him to do a tune  
Then another five for the history of the song  
When and where he last played it, what went wrong  
At last he plays, wonderful, we've heard our first chord  
And we all try to wake up and not look so bored  
Is he going to start now? He's clearing his throat  
No, we now hear about some song that he just wrote  
Hooray, we get into a clear strum  
As he decides he needs his special finger picking plectrum  
Now where is his guitar case, it will be found in there  
The case yes, it's the size of a caravan, but where  
At last the coffin is found and passed over my head  
While he finds the plectrum is in his pocket instead!  
Another strum, yes mate we've already had that  
And all could have guessed that by now a string would be flat  
He's going to use his tuner this time, as it's in his case  
A new flash model he has, with a full LCD face  
We hear at length the precision of its pitch  
He asks us to watch it light up as he flicks the switch  
But it's already on and now he feels a bit of a prat  
Because now his E string and his batteries have gone flat  
Some impatient bloke hands him his gadgetry thing  
While I think, I thought it was my turn to sing

But now we're off at last, Oh God not that song again  
Its the full version of "Famous Flowers of Serving Men"  
I'll read through my words again, at least I can do that  
Oh bum, some bugger's using the sheet as a beer mat!  
When he stops I must get in when everybody just starts to clap  
But it's always the same, at just the wrong time I get in a flap  
I want to, but my lips they just will not come apart  
And suddenly it's too late, some other bugger makes a start  
He won't be nervous, hear a song last week, he'll do it on the wing  
And it will be flawless, but I thought it was my turn to sing

I bet as I begin, in walks that bloke with a banjo on his back  
He'll turn and glasses will fly and some woman gets a whack  
"Sorry!" He says loudly then "Sorry" again apologizing  
for his first shout  
And all watch him - they've forgotten what I'll be singing about  
And then some laughing gang will burst through the doors  
As Man Utd. score on a bar TV to thunderous applause  
Or will I get to the quiet verse and hold the  
atmosphere for a short while  
To be broken by the techo ring of some bastards personal mobile  
Or will it be the glass-cleaning machine to start up with a clatter  
It's not that loud, but enough for my concentration to shatter  
He's still singing Serving Men, at least if he finishes  
this side of tomorrow  
For those still awake, it will not be a hard act to follow  
My God, I've forgotten my first note, I'll start in the wrong key  
I'm fine in the car, on the toilet, but in front  
of people that I now see  
And the words, I've known them for years  
but now they leave my head  
And in their place, is left what! Blind panic instead  
Oh it's ending, right this is the chance for me  
Do you think he realizes the clapping is total sympathy?  
Oh my God, what's happening, some chaps starting to organize  
So now we go round the room anti-clockwise  
Where do we start? Well that's bloody bright  
He's suggesting the chap who's asleep to my right  
So now I will have to wait till we go right round the ring  
Great! And I thought it was my turn to sing!

May 99

## Computer Limericks

Now I thought I was being quite clever and quick  
When I asked my new computer to write a limerick  
    But when it broke down  
        I gave out a frown  
And never quite managed the last line on my own

An essay was the next task my computer I gave  
    For hours I typed away without hitting save  
        And I said "What a damn"  
            When it ran out of RAM  
And was left with sore fingers and in a rave

Next I thought I'd set up a money spread-sheet  
The examples looked all pretty simple and neat  
    But after 3 days  
        I was still in a daze  
So I did my accounts by hand, a much easier feat

My manual said a good picture I could paint  
    But I found the mouse a hell of a restraint  
        At last on the screen  
            I had quite a good scene  
But when printed, it looked all crappy and faint

I know, I'll play with the encyclopaedia CD  
The world's history, that what I want to see  
    I click and start to play  
        and find it's all USA  
And only learn just how biased one country can be

A computer mag. I read had me inspired  
    To get on the net and be wired  
        After the 3rd night  
            I had seen the light  
And since then I've always been tired!



## Chip Shop RIP

The local chippy closed the other month and with my life style it was quite a pain  
But some weeks later all tarted up, it opened again  
Gone was the lino, white tiles and all that stainless steel  
In were bright, primary colours, no doubt to give a modern feel  
The white coats were out, and in was a baseball cap and a red and white shirt  
So 'Persiled' up, it really made my eyes hurt  
I asked for a bag of chips, that was my economy usual  
I didn't even notice the flash menu for the punters perusal  
I waited for a reply and the usual smile but instead three words - *"We do fries"*  
It came from some alltomiton with blamed, unfocused eyes  
"Now, do tell me chips, fries! What is the difference?"  
I think I just wanted a reaction and didn't care if it caused offence  
*"Dunno!"* was the reply which didn't impress me a lot  
Followed by a pause and then *"D'you want some or not?"*  
*"Fries will be fine, just one bag that's all"*  
*"It's a carton, large, regular or small"*  
And without a glance at the menu to see the price  
I said "Large please" If I'd looked I might have thought twice  
And just as I attempted to start up a bit of a chat  
He cut across me - *"D'you want a drink with that?"*  
That's not a bad idea, I had quite a thirst  
"Tea please, but I do beg, put the milk in first"  
*"We got Fanta, Sprite, Tango and Coke"*  
I would have been more pleased if he thought my request was a joke  
And with a lazy wave he gestured to the shelf  
"No thanks" The bubbles give me wind, but I kept that to myself  
Very promptly my chips, sorry 'fries' arrived  
"Sorry, I asked for a large portion" I said somewhat surprised  
I was staring down into a bag containing a stuffed box the size of a packet of fags  
*"Twhat you got, sauce and vinegar are over there in little bags"*  
*That's one pound sixty please for the fries"*  
"I beg your pardon?" Here was yet another surprise  
I had half the chips in twice the packaging for nearly double the old price  
And the thin stiff yellow things called 'fries' didn't look very nice  
But I turned about and behind me was a great big, long queue  
Something the old quiet place never ever knew  
I was paying for that Persil, the carton with it's brand name  
I didn't care about them and just stared at the fries and said to  
myself "What a shame!"

Oct 99

## Cam Man

Women grow wise but big boys still need their toys  
And while he enjoys the gadgets, others it annoys  
The worst of these are when he shows he can afford a  
Digital, X8 lens, latest Japanese camcorder  
They are always out there and always in the way  
At weddings, parties and by the dozen at a school play  
You would have thought with that great extending zoom  
He could stand back a little and give others some room  
But no! He stands with lens less than a foot from the action  
Paranoid he might not catch every reaction  
And all I can see is the back of his head  
And that flashing red lights dodging around instead  
I want to say "Excuse me, I can't see a thing"  
But I know what sort of invitation this will bring  
To go to his tacky house, his video tapes to see  
And I'll have to say nice things and drink council house tea  
I don't want to see on television all that I missed  
I know what happened at the barbecue when I was ...bliss  
Fully happy until caught on film with that discreet fag  
And ignoring my wife and chatting up some painted up old bag  
Its worse when the camera is handed to his youngest brat  
The 12 year old daughter, far too precocious and far too fat  
Suddenly she's Kate Adie and wants my view on Third World debt  
Just as I'm having my other attempt at a secret cigarette  
I grit my teeth and smile with pained pretence  
I want to kill her but with less video evidence  
Strangling her on camera I would be blamed and shamed  
Or the ultimate insult, end up on 'You've been framed'

Oct 99

## I Want to Write a Poem

I'll sit here and write a poem, yes I want to write some prose  
The subject, yes the subject, I can't think, who knows!  
Yesterday I had a great idea! I was so pleased  
But now I've got the time, my brain has just, well, seized  
I'm lost in the doldrums of my sea of inspiration  
Rudderless, drifting on a tide of imagination  
My creative juices are just not flowing; I'm not even damp  
As on the long road of frustration I wait with writer's cramp  
I went to the Park for an idea – I thought it was a good plan  
"Bugger off" A young lass said, "You sad, dirty, old man"  
I would be fine if I could only find that hook  
Stimulation, a concept, an idea to cook  
If the subjects scientific I might make a technical gaff  
But if it's correct and accurate I might just sound naff  
I need that spark, that light in a brain wave  
This is no way for a poet to behave  
I bet the great Bard did not get this writer's block  
I bet ideas flooded as the cogs of his mind would interlock  
Within a moment he would have some intricate plot  
And in an hour would have written the whole bloody lot  
So I suppose, to be honest, I am no Shakespeare  
Not really as I only write about rude things and beer  
Oh, well I'll have to give up and admit I'm in a hole  
And I can't sit here all day, now where's that toilet roll

Jun 99

## The Tale of Slim Jim

The other evening I walked out of the village for about a mile  
Where I met a woman just leaving the lane and crossing a style  
"I wouldn't go down that \*twitten!" I said. "It leads to the canal

Not on a night like this. Why? I'll tell you, I shall

You'll meet a ghost, an 'orrible sight, doubt you'll survive

Ugly gnarled face it has, as bad as when the chap was alive  
For many years back, there was a night Slim Jim lived to dread

Well he would have done, if he 'adn't ended up - dead

Aye, Slim Jim - he was a character, big belly, thick stubby arms

Short, fat, stocky legs and big hands with banana bunch palms

An old black mack & worn out wellies is what he'd always wear

Didn't seem to matter whether the weather was foul or fair

You see rubbish was Slim Jim's business, transporting it up water

It still paid, it took longer but by canal it was somehow shorter

He'd pick up a load of household waste at the main council tip

And by the time he was 'ere, he was well - half way on his trip

You knew Slim Jim was around by the thud his engine made

And the smell - mainly fruit and veg but very old and decayed

The insects knew supper had arrived when Slim Jim was around

I remembers all that buzzing & him swearing, one 'ell of a sound

Forty tonnes of rotting rubbish for one million mossies quite a race

But in the confusion most seemed to end up on Jim's face

He had sores, spots and boils all over where he'd been bitten

He looked like a knobby beetroot from back up the twitten

On the night I remember he cut the engine as he came into dock

And still swatting flies, tied his boat up hard in the lock

I waved, he grunted & waddled round onto the gate for the sluice

Rotten it all was in them days, all of it old, leaky and loose

As usual he put on the 'andle and started winding up the racket

Then suddenly a cog snapped and flew off - he tried to catch it

He wobbled on the gate, the cog was in the water in a flash

And as Jim lost his balance he followed with a mighty splash

He started trashing and swearing as you would, with the shock

Then the water started dragging him through the sluice into the lock

That big floppy body got squeezed through that very small hole

Time he was through, didn't look like our Jim, more like a bean pole

There was panic one person shouted "Try and get him afloat"

So someone - not me - throw in the rope from Jim's own boat

It was too short, so for length they undid the mooring knot

Now this meant his boat was loose which really didn't help a lot

It started bouncing about in the turbulence, now it was untied  
And squashed a now even slimmer Jim hard against the side  
There was another problem as that boat turned about in the swell  
Its bow was thumping the lower lock gates, really hard as well  
As we watched, helpless, this terrible disaster unfold  
We hoped the gates wouldn't break, but they  
were a hundred years old  
First we saw a crack and then suddenly they both just gave  
Down stream they went with Jim and his boat, on a big tidal wave  
We watched him float past his face now covered in fear  
But lost sight when his boat turned over when it hit the main weir  
We pulled his boots from the rubbish, was a shame - both had been holed  
As for Slim Jim, never found, not 'till this day I'm told  
But at the weir listen hard and you'll still hear him shouting abuse  
And the damp air still sometimes gets the whiff of rotting refuse  
With the evening shadows on the water, some often boast  
In the ripples they see the terrible face of Slim Jim's ghost!  
Now that my dear, is why you shouldn't go down the path you see  
Why not walk down the road, you pretty faced thing,  
instead with me  
And if you fancy a drink in the pub to fill your sweet tum  
I'll tell you another tale, there's plenty more  
where that came from!"

Sep 97

\*A Twitten is a Sussex footpath

## The 'ouseboat Story

I'm going to tell you an unbelievable story about the sea  
It involves my old house boat, the dog and me  
    'Twas late at night where I'll begin  
After quite a few beers down at the old Anchor Inn  
    I'd just staggered back to me old wooden boat  
    Tired she was now, but still afloat  
    I climbs on board and stared across the mist  
Feeling quite queasy, in fact a little bit - well you get the gist  
Now suddenly I hears this loud cry or a sort of shout  
    From way beyond the headland, right way far out  
    With the shock, me pipe it fell from me hand  
    As I strained me ears to hear far beyond the land  
    But the next thing I heard was a yelp from the dog  
    Up he sprang going round and round in jog  
    Fourteen and the life you had to admire  
Then I realised the ash from me pipe had caught his back on fire  
    I grabbed his blanket and started rubbing him all over  
    Not a very pleasant task, both had a pungent odour  
As a guard dog he was good even thus he was a wreck  
    Cos with his stench, no buggers came on to my deck  
    As he stopped whimpering I heard the cry again  
    There's somebody out there - someone in pain  
    Right now Bilge I said to him straight  
(I calls him Bilge cos he's muddy brown and always in a state)  
    There's someone out there and here's just you and me  
    It's our duty to rescue them, I'm sure you can see  
So I wound up the engine, it gave a cough and a choke  
    Then thumped into life with a cloud of black smoke  
    I cast off the ropes that had held us on shore  
    For three years now or was it even more?  
    I opened the throttle and pulled the tiller round  
and she chugged off the bank and we were sea bound  
    Oh! The memories of the last trip came flooding back  
I was going to mend that & that, and the stays were slack  
    The lads from the Anchor said she wasn't fit for sea  
But we'd show them now and be heroes would Bilge and me  
    I bet it's a woman caught out by the tide  
    I'll have to dry her off and get her warm inside  
I'd need a towel for that, no Bilge's blanket will do just as well

Being cold and wet, she won't have a great sense of smell  
Thinking of smells, what's that now? Oh the blankets alight  
And the sail and the decking all from that flaming pipe  
Some buckets of water helped, thrown there and here  
And one more on Bilge was his first bath for a year  
Time it was out, the mist 'ad turned to fog, couldn't see the bow  
I'd put on the search light, no, that broke I remember now  
That wasn't all I forgot on that fateful night  
When me intentions were good even if me action weren't right  
You see there's this buoy out there, I know it's on the chart  
But with the fire and fog I forgot the navigational part  
We hit it, she sank, my friend , my home  
And Bilge and I were left sitting on the buoy all alone  
When I say all alone that's not altogether fair  
A bird sat with us crying, just like a human I swear

So that's how I lost me boat, in an act of bravery  
I'm not a man who could lie, I'm sure that you can see  
The lads said I did it deliberate like, you know for  
The insurance, they saw the fire from the shore  
But you believe me, you'll help me won't you?  
I just need someone to sign this form that's all you need do  
It's all explained on the claim form and in a letter they wrote  
Saying get a witness and we'll buy you a big, broad,  
brilliant, bold, beautiful, bright, brand-new boat!

Aug 97

## A Simple Journey to Slough

Now this is a totally true story, a simple tale of how  
One Monday morning I attempted a train journey to Slough  
Normally I drive – not very PC but cost is the main reason  
But on this week for a change, I decided to try a weekly season  
“Slough” he sighed “A weekly. No, I can’t do that on my own”  
So armed with some fat floppy book he reached for the telephone  
All I could hear was “‘assocks, Slough weekly is that a 48 or 52?”  
Followed by a pause, as behind me, more joined the queue  
After 9 minutes (yes I counted) an unbelievable feat  
I was given a ticket at last, along with the requested receipt  
The ticket was so normal and innocent, just a little square card  
Typed with black ink and on it, now listen hard  
Printed in the ‘via’ box LONDON prefixed with a plus  
Little did I realize how this would cause me so much fuss!  
The first time my straight forward journey hit any resistance  
Was at Victoria when the tube turn style beeped ‘Seek assistance’  
A very pleasant guard said he wasn’t being mean  
But my ticket wasn’t valid with what he called a code 13  
He was rather confused because the via box had the plus sign  
And the word LONDON, so the ticket should have been fine  
He advised me the best way to end all the frustration  
Was to go back and get another ticket from the Train Station  
So I battled up-stream, upstairs and joined the shortest queue  
Which slowly dissipated in a minute or two  
I talked through the glass to a lady who was very NICE  
But despite calling her colleague, couldn’t offer any advice  
After a long while they decided to call for the supervisor  
But after another long wait she left with nobody any wiser  
“I’ll re-issue the ticket,” said the speaker voice. “It’s all I can do”  
“After that I am afraid it’s all up to you”  
Up to me? – no, I thought don’t have a row  
I mean all I’m doing is trying to get to Slough  
So I returned to the tube, but was soon back at the window  
“*Your ticket didn’t work*” “I’m not surprised, I didn’t think so.”  
But it’s got the plus sign – let’s try a different code  
But I must warn you, there may be money owed”  
‘*Let you try it – I’m the one walking up and down to the tube*’  
“Look! I’m doing all I can and there’s no need to be rude!”  
So back I went to the underground with ticket number three  
Back to the turn style to see what the difference would be



It failed, a guard tried and I did try and warn her  
But she knew best “See dear, there’s a plus sign in the corner!”  
She let me through and yes, I did get to Slough  
So I’ll skip to the return journey and say how  
At Paddington’s service desk the assistant showed  
Some interest and said, “They’ve used the wrong bleeding code!”  
But don’t worry, this is something that I can fix  
You don’t want LONDON but ZONES 1,2,3,4,5 and 6  
I’ll fill out a form for the pillocks at ‘assocks, does make ya cross  
So he filled out the form which needed counter signing by his boss  
“No, no, no” said the Boss. “No” He repeated bluntly  
“This forms not for a weekly season, it’s only for a monthly!  
We being Great Western now, just aren’t able  
To re-issue weeklies bought from Connex South Central”  
And I expect you can imagine my total euphoria  
When he told me to change it at the ticket office at, yes, Victoria  
The first ticket inspector on the tube was pleasant enough  
But when challenged by the second, I had just had enough  
*“Look at the bloody plus sign, isn’t that OK for you”*  
He rolled his eyes and just let me through  
I went to ‘Enquires’ at Victoria just to make a change  
And soon the lady, who was very nice, had to arrange  
For the ticket office Supervisor’s Manager to be involved  
With the sarky comment “We’ll soon have this solved”  
I waited and waited, for 20 minutes I had to wait  
But I left with ticket number four but for my train, I was too late  
8:20 I arrived home, hours later than usual by far  
“You’re late and stressed” she said “M25?  
– I thought you weren’t going by car?”

## I does like a Walk on a Sunday

Some Sundays I go for a walk for the peace and the air  
I'll walk for miles and really don't mind where  
But I do like some rocks, they add interest to a ramble  
And I always take my trusty rope in case I fancy a scramble  
As I leaves the 'ouse, me Mum will always say  
"You mind that rope, you'll hang yourself with it one day"  
On one trip, I cycles to where I'd never been to before  
Locked up the bike and then walked up onto the moor  
The heather was cheerful and warm with a scent so rare  
The view just swept away and I had the wind in my hair!  
After an hour or so I found a small little rock outcrop  
& I clambered around for a while with my rope tied at the top  
There was no reason to do it and I didn't even think why  
I just can't explain that feeling up there so incredibly high  
When I was tired, I lay in the sun and had a long bask  
And had quite a few nips from my old trusty flask  
Suddenly from nowhere this man appeared and walked past  
I said "Good day" and he laughed, saying it wouldn't last!  
Confused, I went back to my solitude and my quiet peace  
But soon another interruption caused this to cease  
A faint sobbing that's what I could hear  
Not sheep, I knows about them, on that I was clear  
I picked myself up and coiled in the rope  
And started scouring the landscape in a sort of a hope  
Something wasn't quite right inside my mind  
It wasn't just the brandy, there was something here to find  
Now I walked round a boulder - you could have struck me dead  
There was this woman with no clothes on - stark naked!  
I didn't know where to look or what to do  
She was really crying and sad, you don't expect it, do you?  
"Hello" I said - well that's how a conversation starts!  
Then I offered her my hanky to sort of cover her - 'parts'  
She started to talk, with tears I heard her story  
How she'd come up here with her lover for romance for he  
Was her wonder, her hero, oh how she'd dreamed  
Of this moment, up here and that's how it seemed  
Till she'd removed all her garments for a sexy pose  
But he'd just laughed and run off with all her clothes  
And now she was all chilly and scared out of her wits

I could see she was cold by the colour of her ... hands  
She was in such a state, so I gave her me shirt and sweater  
Christmas presents from mother, she felt so much better  
Then it was only the lower bits that were exposed  
No choice but to lend her me old trusty trousers I supposed  
"Oh thank you so much!" she said "It's just so embarrassing"  
"I don't know how to ask, but there's just one more thing"  
Her feet were now the problem because they were still bare  
She couldn't walk anywhere, until she had something to wear  
I took off me boots and socks, they fitted her reasonably well  
And she only made one small comment about the smell  
And suddenly I was left in me boxer shorts, that was all  
Green with teddy bears which I always thought were cruel  
Present from Mum again, the Christmas before last - but Aye  
Good job now they were clean on - on Wednesday  
We started walking down together off the rocks  
But I couldn't go very fast, without even me socks  
I said "You go ahead and find your bloke if you like,  
I meet you at the bottom by me push bike"  
She thanked me again, "Meeting you has been so handy"  
I told her to help herself to some of me brandy  
It was still in me trousers with me wallet and keys  
She smiled and I thought how good it was to please  
It took me a long time to walk down in bare feet  
And as luck would have it, the first person that I meet  
Was a policeman, it was amazing, right up there  
I mean to see a copper anywhere these days is very rare  
As we met I started to tell him. Saying "I am so glad...."  
But he stopped me and said "Now 'old on a minute lad!  
We've had a report from a lady who's seen  
A half-drunken rapist in underpants of green  
She said this mad man went to attack her, see  
So she had to run off, afraid for 'er virginity  
This chap 'ad threatened to tie her up - and  
The rope she described is like the one in your hand"  
I told him what happened although I didn't seem to make sense  
And he chuckled saying it would make an interesting defence  
So now I'm here in court let me say just one thing more  
She weren't no virgin, she's played this game before  
Where is she now, and me possessions - gone without trace  
Gents of the jury and me mother over there, I rest my case.

## Fifty

Chorus: You're fifty, you're fifty, we can't say we're glad  
It's down hill from here, you'll go mad, bad or sad  
Enjoy what there's left, there ain't much you'll see  
Just library book fines and day-time TV

Now you've been active with your wife at right-hand  
Busy with work and as a Dad which is grand  
But you'll need to change now, now the years they have slid  
And there's not too much time before they nail on that lid

Now that you're old, there are new things to learn  
There are suitable classes - down at Age Concern  
They do coach trips and bingo and their tea shop's a must  
And if you want a day out then you'll join National Trust

This easy life style might sound like a bore  
But remember there is always old radio 4  
We hope you'll keep going that is just until  
The brain can not cope with your next codicil

You won't be so bored as you think you'll be  
The walk to the health centre for Doctors to see  
As your body gets old, bits start going wrong  
The list of the ailments it is my next song....

## The Welly Boot Song

I once was a soldier at Waterloo  
Before the big battle, the boss said he knew  
We'll win this here war 'gainst Napoleon  
He might have his muskets and many cannon  
But marching through mud with that blood in battle suits  
What you need, me lads, are your Wellington boots.  
*Put your wellies on now, put your wellies on lad*  
*Be black, green or yellow, you'll always be glad*  
*Once wearing ones wellies, one can wait for the worst*  
*Whatever you do boys, put your wellies on first!*

Designed for the sole, a feat to invent  
The style tells ones class from worker to gent  
No fishermen, firemen or farmer will try  
Just anything else 'cos feet don't stay that dry  
They work as a pair, with one you just might  
Be 'all right' for the left or you're left with a right  
A builder just knows the toes must be steel  
While a furry lined fleece give a feminine feel  
If wet grass is a worry, or dog shit you dread  
Or in warm, sloppy cow pats you just want to tread  
Just find the next puddle and in it you stop  
But not so deep that water tips in the top.

I've stopped spotting trains for women instead  
Last night I caught one and took her to bed  
'Tas there she grabbed me, if in some rugby maul  
I'as bounced round the bedroom like some tennis ball  
As she clawed off her clothes, she swelled up in size  
Telling me it was time to vulcanise!  
*Put your welly on now, put your welly on lad*  
*Be black, pink or yellow, you'll always be glad*  
*Once wearing ones welly, one can wait for the worst*  
*Whatever you do boys, put your welly on first!*

The musical notation is written on five staves in a single system. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The word "versus" is centered below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody. The word "chorus" is centered below the third staff. The fourth and fifth staves complete the musical piece, ending with a double bar line.

## The Office Girl

Come all you office fellows and listen to this drag  
To while away this tea break now and get me through this fag  
It's all about that programmer, the one first floor and new  
Oh Sarah can't you look at me, the way I look at you

With a right dull day, and a right full tray  
Wait for me monthly pay  
And all I've tried on you dear lass  
You've looked the other way

So I went up to your colleague as he sat by your desk  
I flashed around my sub-routines and listings at my best  
You didn't even notice me or even turn your head  
Just watched that bloody console screen and typed away instead

So I went up to your project boss and said I'd lend a hand  
He thanked me for my interest, I knew he'd understand  
He sat me by you for a while, I thought I was on a winner  
But then the system had to crash, so you went off to dinner  
Oh Sarah, Sarah can't you join the squash club or the darts  
Rounders, \*Stoolball, anything, I'd see your moving parts  
Oh what I'd do for us to go and have a game of pool  
You've snookered me already lass and I feel such a fool

Office party, social time, the beer was brave and bold  
I watched you dance across the floor and wished that I could hold  
A rush of blood, I ran to you, so what if I was 'issed  
All I did was grab you and quickly I just kissed

### Last Chorus

In a right quick way, I was made to pay  
Whack! Went your hands I'd say  
And those two things the Lord gave me  
They still hurt to this day.

Written 1982

Music: The Nutting Girl (trad)

## Mourning the Night Before

I wake up in pain, I'm sprawled on the floor  
I just want to die, I can't take any more  
What happened last night, I just cannot think  
I just had some mates round for my home brew drink.  
*Now home brew and friends, it seems they don't mix*  
*You can't have just one pint, it's got to be six*  
*You keep wanting more, till you pass out on the floor*  
*And next you are mourning the night before.*

My head it so hurts, I just feel so rough  
Why can't I give up when I've had just enough  
I can't feel my body, but there's this bad smell  
At least my guts working, of that I can tell

The room it stops spinning, it seems I'm not alone  
Bodies lie around like it is some war zone  
My mates all look dead and been in a fight  
With glasses in hand they've held tight all night

I hear my wife now, she's moaning at me  
For once she has cause, on that we'll agree  
She comes in the room, her temper does lose  
And only will stop when I'm sick on her shoes

I look up at her now, she's just a blurred trace  
She looks so much better if you can't see her face  
I tell her she's ugly, but this is not wise  
She stands on my head so I apologise

My stomach has grown and swelled up in size  
It's like a beached whale on the ground as it lies  
This beer makes me ill, my body pollutes  
Next time will ask for a brew kit from Boots!



## Five Daze

Now she comes home on a Monday night– as tired as tired can be!  
But sees the washing on the floor where washing shouldn't be  
She calls me over and sits me down – will you kindly tell to me  
What is that washing doing there, where washing shouldn't be?  
Oh! You're tired my love, you're tired my love, so tired you cannot see  
They are, yes my workshops rags, yes workshop rags they be  
Now many a day I've travelled a 1000 mile or more  
But doing the flipping washing – now that's what I call a chore

Now she comes home on a Tuesday night– as tired as tired can be!  
But sees no food upon her plate 'cos now she wants her tea  
She calls me over and sits me down – will you kindly tell to me  
Now where's some food upon a plate 'cos now I want my tea?  
Oh! You're tired my love, you're tired my love, so tired and by the way  
I cannot do the shopping today, 'cos it was a bank holiday  
Now many a day I've travelled a 1000 mile or more  
But doing the bloody shopping – now that's what I call a bore!

Now she comes home on a Wednesday night– as tired as tired can be!  
And sees some marks on the kitchen floor, where marks there shouldn't be  
She calls me over and sits me down – will you kindly tell to me  
What are these marks on our kitchen floor, where marks there shouldn't be ?  
Oh! You're tired my love, you're tired my love, so tired it's no surprise  
So tired in fact my love, you see spots in front of your eyes  
Now many a day I've travelled a 1000 mile or more  
But nobody ever told me, you wash a kitchen floor

Now she comes home on a Thursday night– as tired as tired can be!  
And thinks the house is quiet, when quiet it shouldn't be  
She calls me over and sits me down – will you kindly tell to me  
Where are the kids, cos they're not here and quiet it shouldn't be?  
Oh! You're tired my love, you're tired my love and I  
think I've been a fool  
I washed the kitchen floor today, but left the kids at school  
Now many a day I've travelled a 1000 mile or more  
But leaving my kids at school, now that you can't ignore



Now she comes home on a Friday night– as drunk as drunk can be!  
She was so flaming drunk she fell all over me  
So I drag her in and sits her down – will you kindly tell to me  
Where are you so drunk, yes you're so drunk,  
so drunk you can not see  
I'm drunk, I'm drunk, I'm drunk she said, so drunk I cannot see  
But you see now, what I go through, when it's you instead of me!

May 99

Music: Seven Drunken Nights

### Long Beard

The youngsters watch, when realising I'm not that weird  
It's normally a girl who'll say *"How long you been growing that beard?"*  
"It grows by itself" I reply "If you leave it alone  
I just don't scrape my face with a razor and all that foam"  
The philosophy behind the statement is normally lost so I stop  
In time for their next inspiration *"Hey! I bet you like ZZ Top"*  
"They're OK!" quenches that remark. *"Do you use shampoo?"*  
"With this much hair right under your nose, I think you would too!"  
*"What does ya Mum think of it and all your friends?"*  
*"I think it's well – sad really. Do you get split ends?"*  
At this point a boy will say *"You got your head on upside down"*  
I pretend I've never heard this before and try not to frown  
The girls laugh and add *"It's so long, I bet it's a real bind"*  
"No, it's like your long hair but in front of my face and not behind"  
*"No, it must blow around and really get in the way"*  
"No, not normally, but of course there was the other day"  
*"What happened then?"* "I was sick!" *"Eeeer!"* They say!

## The Internet Dream

I had a dream the other evening my friend and I want to share it with you.

A great dream during the hours of darkness & cheap rate phone calls.  
And in this dream my friends, I was in a world where a man would be judged not just the colour of his graphics but by the contents of his web pages.  
Oh it was a *beautiful* dream where we *all* had the same access regardless of the class of our operating system and the size of our memory.

A dream where one day, oh yes - one day, yes – *one* day my friends all would run on every others platforms and we all live in total harmony and without the evil of corrupted disk.

Yes – there is evil out there now my friend, but in my dream we had no viruses and no bugs, and we all helped each other and soon found even hardened DOSers could be helped.

Some of us have found evil, oh yes, and we should pray we will not be let into temptation, for some of us here have done so. Some have been bitten by the Apple, others like Commodore paid the price and bite the dust and there are many, many of you here now who hold the belief we should only have 32 bits in our hearts, I pray for you all my friends.

There was no evil in my dream, a great and wonderful dream where each one of us were equal right to the far corners of our keyboards.

Oh how beautiful it was, here people didn't feel even slightly guilty when spreading Microsoft WORD.

We had a world where nobody felt like a mouse being pushed around by some almighty hand. Listen to me my friend - from the safety of your own home listen and realise you have the power, the power to click your fingers and command almost anything to be delivered.

And do you know what this dream did for me? It let look through an open architecture window and what did I see, go on asked me, what did you see! I saw a rainbow - I know, we've all seen a rainbow, but here, in my dream I could see all 16 million colour at once my friends, oh what a screen.

All was so perfect, servers were not distracted by others calling and we all felt the power from inside ourselves, not from the INTEL inside.

Let us dream now, we could all dream together. Why don't you come and join us, do join us, I can give you that dream, for just for 999 dollars plus 9.99 a month you can have this dream.

*Praise be the fraud*

## Family Poet

My wife takes the kids to school then off to work she goes  
On returning home she want to talk "Not now,  
I'm writing prose"  
So she takes the dog for a walk but comes back far to soon  
"Won't be a moment" I say "Just adding in a tune"  
"Dad! I've done this for teacher, can you check it before  
I show him?"  
"Later dear." While doing the tune, I'd had an idea for a poem  
And I'd just decided to turn this into more of a shaggy dog tail  
When I'm interrupted again "Teacher says, if it's  
not right I'll fail"  
"Later!" I scream, she cries and there's one hell of a furore  
And the whole episode gave me another idea for a story  
So while it's fresh in my mind I start on it straight away  
It's about family life, a domestic fly on the wall play  
When I'd finished it I found the whole family had all gone  
A note said "Better off without you" Hey, what a great  
title for a song!

## Addict

Is it my turn to speech now, right thanks councillor I'll try to be brief  
I'll start by saying how helpful I find this group and a great relief  
To know that we're not the only parents out there suffering in this way  
I've bottled so much up and not told a sole before today  
Our son has been an addict now a for a few years  
I'm sure it was that school and being tempted by his peers  
We noticed him changing, but didn't acknowledge it was  
happening to us  
We've always been a good family and not the sort to make a fuss  
What is so surprising is he's so open about it all  
He doesn't see it as a problem, but what they all do to be "cool"  
It happens mainly in his room, I want to ban it all from our home  
But I don't want to push him away, you see them on the streets all alone  
If you enter his room while he's ... he's ... well you know  
If he's only just started he'll ask me, yes me, if I want a go  
But within a short while he will cut off all communication  
I used to try and get through to him, but I've now lost that determination  
He'll sit crossed legs in the middle of the floor in a gaze  
Perfectly still with only his fingers twitching in funny ways  
Me and the wife were worried sick, we've tried talking, but he shouts and  
gets really bad  
And if we take it away he goes ballistic and he's such a young lad  
But he is a total addict it rules and controls the whole of his life  
And I just cannot help him anymore nor can my wife  
All this stuff is evil even thou some think they are just tame toys  
I hate them all, The Nintendo, Playstation and Gameboys

## Men by Women

Only 10% of men I know haven't got some form of wife  
And of those 10% have what I call a life  
But only 10% of those I would consider to be the right age  
And only 10% of those command even the most moderate wage  
That's 1 in 10000 before I even consider appearance  
And I'm sure only 10% of them will understand words like love and  
    endearance  
    Am I at the end of my division– well not quite  
I'm sure only about 10% would come back after the first night  
    So that's one in a million – that's quite a may-be  
    Think I've got more chance on the National Lottery

## Morris Who

Singing melodies backed by a thumping rhythm swirl and echo down the  
street  
Hheads are turning, what is this that halts the bustle of hurried shopping feet?  
Look! Synchronised bouncing bodies with flashing white hanky flicks!  
And whooping and crying with the clashing of straight cut woodland sticks  
Children point as they are dragged by faces that either smile or frown  
But loathed or loved everybody knows when the Morris dancers come to  
town!  
Confused foreign faces ask the questions with a bewildered smile  
And when they are pretty the explanation lasts a while  
They are told of pagan rights and ancients fertility folklores  
And influences of cotton mills, crusades and Napoleonic wars  
Cut short is the tale and reasons for the painted black face  
His mate cry, they want to dance, but there is an empty place  
None the wise she moves her camera to find the perfect spot  
But how does one capture the music and movement in a single  
still & silent shot?  
The dancers finish and leave with dreams that the audience found the  
experience enchanting  
But I hear one say "No, didn't really I, I likes that good old line dancing!

May 2000

## Hobby Horse

Dear Chairman, Sorry chap, I am going to resign  
Why, well for once it's my turn to have a wine  
Our club night is my evening out to pursue my hobby  
My interest – the part of my life that is hassle free  
I go for fun and to learn and after have a quick drink  
Get away from the wife, kids, dog and kitchen sink  
But I don't want the soap box politics and philosophy  
And hate the debates for hours the finer points of its theology  
I don't mind hearing that the committee has had another row  
But its spills over and ruins our club nights now  
We spend a whole night arguing whether to start at 7 or 8  
It's so boring no wonder half the members turn up late  
This is not a subject over which my temper I can loose  
Does it really matter about what, where, when, how and who's  
Get on with it, forget the constitution and the games for power  
I used to laugh and smile – it was a happy hour  
You over complicate so much to me its no surprise  
At your work your boss will not allow you to organize  
So good bye I heard the last of one of your boring pet talks  
My dog will be pleased – I'll have time for longer walks  
SO from now on Thursday nights I will sit here all alone  
No - wait a minute, may be I should start a club of my own

Apr '00

## Alcohol

Please think for a moment about alcohol and let us reflect  
On the full impact on society of its effect  
Its responsible for quiet a few births, death and some marriages I knows  
Chaps proposing while the Dutch courage shows  
Booze creates the rioting in football fans  
And all that litter, the bottles and cans  
The shouting and screaming after the pub and the fights  
And have you seem the queues at casualty on Saturday nights  
Mood swings from depression to unsubstantiated elation  
Artistic inspiration for a mind bending creation  
Heated debates on the quality and merits of a specific ale  
Bladders to burst and kidneys to fail  
It makes very simple things far more complex  
And lets ugly people get some sex  
The behind the bar is a massive industry with thousands of jobs  
In front their products turn us normal people into hooligan yobs  
And in the morning arching head and an empty pocket  
But as long am I can remember what happened I don't knock it  
Because for a while dull old me had a bit of a spark  
Even if I'm responsible for a stain on the tree in the park

Oct 99



## The World in an Instant

"Where's my Tea" and her fist collided with the table in a crash  
The cutlery shuddered *"Mummy faster than you" and the kill -*  
*"she uses smash!"*

I shuddered "Sorry but I hate the taste and besides, it costs a lot more  
*"So I miss Neighbours on TV because we are really poor"*  
It'll be a quarter of an hour, I'll bring it in to you on a tray  
*"I am not eating it during Home and Away"*

And Pouting, stormed back to what she considered her TV  
Leaving peace and the simmering saucepan to me

So this was why my Wife didn't use the cookery books I bought her  
And everything around me was in packets and just needed boiling water  
As a kid I remember freeze dried coffee and milk granules  
and powdered mustard

But here were soup, sauces, stew seasons, tea, cakes, gravy  
and instant custard

What next? What bubbled in a lab breaker now, what was the scientists  
current labour

What month sensation was being reduced to chemical colourings  
and artificial flavour

I too quickly had an answer as I stretched across the page of a household  
magazine

An advert with bright and happy colours but to me quite obscene  
I had to be wrong, I wanted to be wrong but no  
It said the world was now a better place we had instant cappuccino

## Girls

I once met a girl her hair was so silky and fine  
Oh how I dream this lovely lass could be mine  
The illusion was broken  
As words were spoken  
When out came a thick Essex wine

The next one looked so happy and gay  
I smiled and she said by the way  
How you a light  
Showing teeth not very white  
And her breath was like last nights ash tray

When I saw the last one I thought phew  
Such a fabulous figure and lickable lips too  
Do you want drink  
No I don't think  
Sorry dear but I could never fancy you

## The Block

Poetry explores our thousands of words each original and totally unique  
Combinations run to billions so why does my first line sound so weak  
Now others can do it not once but again and again  
How do they work, where what do they do and when  
Do they smoke, do dope, on coke, how do these folk invoke  
The hope of a good joke and don't just mope  
My only feat is to excreta soulless rubbish  
Fit for the recycling bin, now all that I wish  
Is I could string a couple of verses of a song  
That could partly convert the emotions of my frustration  
Hey, without warning suddenly I'm performing, I'm flowing  
Finding the right words and phrases, I'm glowing  
Full of passion, pride and pain  
Oh no now I'm thinking about I've lost it all again

## Alfred the Great

Nearly two hundred years back I had a relative, who is of course now dead  
But there's quite a tale about my great, great, great, great grandfather  
Alfred

His quiet country life changed forever on hearing of the treat of that  
Napoleon

And very soon he and most of his mates had taken the Queen's shilling and  
from their village were gone

He wasn't a good soldier and whilst marching kept stabbing the soldier in  
front

So his Sergeant gave him an old bayonet, hoping he'd do less damage with  
one that was blunt

Within three months they were trained & travelled across to France

T'was here where a very unhappy Alfred saw his big chance  
To get away from all this heavy guns and harsh orders he volunteered  
as a cook

Every one hated the bland food so if he give the daily boiled cabbage some  
taste and a new look

He wouldn't do all that rifle and battle stuff and he'd eat better grub too

So Alfred started brewing up each day a quiet magnificent stew

One of his secret new seasonings was some of the officer's stuff

Along with the odd rat and worm, they loved it, there was never enough

Took the hairs off your chest thou sometimes did Alfred's new broth

But its reputation only enhanced when it cured a whole division of an 'orrible  
cough

Now one day Alfred was summoned to the posh tents of the high command  
Where Wellington himself told of top secret plans including a specific  
demand

In two days they'd charge at the French so tomorrow Alfred was to prepare  
a special good luck meal

He was cooking for forty thousand now, how did that make him feel?

He thanked this big booted boss and dazed wandered back to the store tent

And found to his horror his supplies were nearly all spent

He'd have to go for a walk and try and find bits to use but didn't  
leave till mid afternoon

And after a natter with the camp sentries he realised that the light  
would be fading soon

He found lots of slugs, snails and after scratching his head added a few lice

Then got some odd shaped things that he could pass as vegetables if

he give them a dice  
But his kit bag was getting rather heavy and as it started to rain he decided  
to turn back  
But to his bewilderment found it was so late everything had gone all black  
He'd been wondering so long he didn't know in which the direction in which  
to start  
For ages he plodded around till suddenly stumbled right into this old cart  
Well it must be one he thought, after a fumble and feel  
It had a rope to pull it and on each side a big wheel  
He crawled underneath for a rest and to wait for the rain to clear  
A while stilling huddled up there, he had this wonderful idea  
So when it stopped spitting he put his bag onto the back this transport  
he'd found  
If he'd gone to the front me might have noticed this long metal thing  
rather big and round  
But no and he started pulling the rope at the back, it was heavier than  
beggar's belief  
But thought it was worth it 'cos if caught in another shower he could keep  
dry again underneath

After a very long pull he found a path with a familiar turn  
And soon saw his garrison with all the camp fires a burn  
"Halt! Who goes there?" A guard suddenly shouted somewhat to his  
surprise  
"Private Alfred The Cook, I've been out collecting supplies"  
With his flaming torch the sentry walked forward "By 'ek , well done"  
Blimmy matey how have you, on your own capture a enemy gun?"  
Alfred was in shock too as this bloke called to his pal  
As a few minutes later the whole regiment got a boost in moral  
They sat him on the barrel and found him the biggest lamp  
And cheered and cried as they dragged him for hours all round the camp

Next day everything changed and Alfred never made his big stew  
The Officers ordered an immediate advance, you see they took the view  
It was better to strike while all the men were in such a good mood  
Still jolly about Alfred captured canon they'd forget about food  
The strategy worked and they lead a piercing bloody attack  
Five miles Napoleon's platoon were forced to pull back  
Wellington never forgot about Alfred, he said he was the reason they'd  
wone  
An ceremoniously make Alfred the official custodian of his captured gun

He was to keep it ready in case it was needed to  
pound the enemy trenches  
But ammo was a problem, see the British had bigger balls  
that the Frenchise  
But he told Alfred to keep the gun ready for action all the same  
'Cos if desperate they'd collect up the frog balls and fire them back from  
were they came  
Also Wellington noticed its bore wasn't really true enough to be a piece of  
precision artillery  
And not firing straight he suspected it had been abandoned  
by the French military  
But poor old Alfred dragged his canon all over France, where ever his  
army would go  
He longed to just be a cook again and now hated the smell of brasso  
But Wellington wasn't stupid and when his men were down in the dumps  
He rallied his men with the Alfred's tale again, it always came up trumps

At the end of the war Alfred and his canon where never stood down  
The de-commissioning papers went astray, I expect to the wrong town  
So to the end of his days he kept that gun polished like a fool  
Always believing the ministry would someday give him that call  
He didn't mind really 'cos he thought them French would play  
some new silly game  
And sooner or later they'd be a big row and there'd be back fighting again  
On his death bed he got a promise about his beloved gun  
"keep it well oiled and at the ready" he told his oldest son  
And each generation done the same and the tradition has gone on  
And its here beside me now, my great great great great Grandad's canon

### Was that a poem!

What was that! It didn't rhyme so to me it sounds wrong  
And without the presence of a tune it certainly wasn't a song  
It could not have been a joke because there was no punch line  
And no political statement is complete without a whine  
It plainly was not religious without an attempt at a preach  
And I couldn't detect a moral so it was not attempting to teach  
I could not even detect any passion, I couldn't feel a heart  
Does this rubbish pass for what they call 'modern art'  
Is so what a shame I can't remember now how a single line goes  
Oh, he's now explaining it was abstract work of descriptive prose  
I should describe it as 'crap' when its my turn to analysis  
But I'll say it was a pleasant performance piece as a encouraging  
compromise

Jul '00

## Charity

Last weekend I sat down with my bills and my calculator  
And some growling hours and a battery pack later  
I'd done it – my accounts for the month were all done  
And I had £20 over – now with that I could have some fun  
No! It had been a good month so I'd give it to charity  
There must be somebody who needed it, some society  
But the big question now was which one then?  
There are dozens for animals and the odd one or two for children  
But which? Every day I get pleading letters dropped on my hall floor  
And every weekends given an envelope by somebody at my door  
There are the charity shops in town, I could give them some  
No I get my clothes there so they already get enough of my income  
Thinking now, there wasn't a shop I knew without at least one tin  
Snugly positioned just in case you want to drop some change in  
And pubs were no better with the traditional whiskey jar  
Sitting there half full for years heavily chained to the bar  
Ads in papers - someone smiling who we were told was going to die  
And stark bill board pictures attracting our attention as we go by  
My Mum's solution to everything seemed to be making a list  
So I wrote down all the possibilities that seem to exist  
Soon I had piles for research, restoring, rescuing and rehabilitation  
Rest homes, wrecked lives and some odd rare breed re-integration  
A few years back I didn't remember all of this  
Did the government pay or did we live in ignorant bliss?  
We had the sally army on a Friday night at the local pub  
And a hat passed round at Christmas at the society club  
Now it is a multi-million pound business, a whole industry  
Aimed at heart strings, making us just feel as guilty as you can be  
All this concern was making my brain hurt for heaven sake  
Is there a charity doing research into a headache?  
I could give it to cancer research or them working on stopping a heart attack  
Yes - at least than if I'll ill it will have been investment and I'll get  
something back

Jul 00



## Gone

Where, where, where, where, where, where  
It can not have just vanished into thin air  
“Keep looking” I am always saying, and it will be found  
I mean it just must, yes must be somewhere around  
I have checked the car, the kitchen and the hovel they call my shed  
The lounge and living rooms and had a grovel under my bed  
I bet I trip over it when I don’t need it tomorrow  
It’s not the sort of thing that the kids would borrow  
You see I have children who were magpies in a previous life  
I must must must find it, if not well my wife  
She’ll say “Now where were you when you last had it in your hand”  
Losing it bad enough but clever comments like that I just can stand  
I’ll reply “If I knew that I would have found it by now”  
“I was only trying to help” she saying starting a row  
I check under the cat and at the back of top dusty shelves  
But what I really want to know is why these things hide themselves  
Its times like this when I know how much she really does care  
If she really loved me then this would be a problem we would share  
But despite the shouting that occurs because I’ve lost this dam thing  
Do my rampant loud requests any assistance bring  
NO! She and the kids seem to believe it’s my fault its gone walkabout  
Its quite amazing the excuses not help they will spout  
But do I have the same attitude when they are late for school  
Do I want them to arrive without their games kit and look a fool  
But when it my item that is lost and gone  
It’s not their problem so to them there is nothing wrong  
Oh sod it I’ll go the shop and buy another that will be easier than this by far  
Yes! Decision made, now where did I leave the keys for the car

Aug00

## Black man

Some seem to enjoy the habit of dressing solely in black  
They may look co-ordinated but to me there's something they lack  
Of course its colour, I should have thought of that  
Do they think they are machete or just slightly less fat?  
But there's something more missing, what else to they deny  
Is something wrong inside them, did somebody die?  
Such an effort limiting ones purchases to this one dull flat tone  
If it's just a habit then don't let them go shopping on your own  
Are trying to fake a personnel aura or is it just for a lark  
A sophisticated image or do they want to hide in the dark  
I just don't know – I can't read them standing silent and bold  
They my feel cool, but to me look bloody cold  
I'll leave them to their dry cleaning bills and a plasona I think is over the top  
May be I should try it – yes, when I see something black in my charity shop

Jun 00

### Fat Man

Dumping downing drowning cramming crunching chomping crush consume  
Shovel it into the funnel, guzzle stuff it in, bulk it down all in volume  
A thrusting thirsting for bursting as you load it all in with a push  
Just get it in the gob and pile it in, munch into your mush  
Wolf it down out of sight, a dog down for it dinner  
It is treated as race and you lust to be the winner  
Not just nourishment but piled plates of passion  
You wouldn't last a day on a post war ration  
Funny why don't I find it must of a surprise  
You don't over indulge as much with your exercise  
Calories by the kilo through carbohydrates you are caving  
I don't think you are wondering about the third world staving  
You get whole cakes down your cake hole without touching your lips  
Not to mention the greasy wet limp fried handfuls of fat saturated chips  
You are not a so much a consumer more an inefficient food processing machine  
One with no manners revolting by products and emissions which are not very clean

## Thank you

A wonderful meal, yes, but did I pass my gratitude on to the chief?  
What a great exhibition of controlling a match but did I congratulate the ref?

I couldn't have written such a great report she did extremely well  
But I can't cope with the repercussions of a compliment, know you never can  
tell

They all took the trouble to go behold the call of duty  
But we do not respond because we are too bleeding snooty

Reserved, stupid, I don't know is it an English thing  
I mean what tragic consequences will a compliment bring

So the next time it happens don't think about it for a while  
Just say something, anything or if you really can't just give a smile

Jan 01

## Real Love

Have I ever told you - you have wonderful happy eyes  
You look so beautiful it is always still a wonderful surprise  
You have had your hair done and what a colour too  
Perfect, of course I mean it, it really is just you  
I see, for your ear rings, very special so sheik and long  
No, no, any shorter and they would look wrong  
They match your new dress, please can I see  
No I really want to otherwise I wouldn't say, you know me  
Absolutely fabulous, that looks so right  
By the way me dear did I say I was out with the lads tonight!

Mar 01

## Tank man

Hello Minster in your 4 by 4 waiting at the lights  
Bet you haven't seen me standing here, up there at such heights  
I wonder what you think about, as you drive around in that tank  
Can you really afford it, or is it really owned by the bank?  
Is that why you got it? So we think it is something you can afford  
The Lord of manor touch, a few rungs up from my rusty old ford  
The engine does sound impressive, I don't know, but I expect it's a V8  
Now I hate to say this chap, but you don't look very happy as you wait  
Your expression don't say "Look at me I've made it!"  
You are so fallawn and don't look like you are enjoying it a bit  
I expect you are a very nice man and visit your Mum every Sunday  
Or maybe you give all your spare time and money away  
I know, as I walk over this crossing and I'll give you a smile  
Will it rile you I wonder if someone like me dare look at you a while  
I'll try and radiate a bit of happiness and let's see how you react  
But I warn you mate, I'll judge you, it's my only guide as to how you act  
Let's see how you respond from a happy gesture from a pedestrian  
Will I pass your approval and if so what I wonder will sir test me on  
So here we go and I'll watch your face and let's see what appears on it  
WOW, well that to me says more than what you got under that bonnet

Jan01

## God man

You stand on my doorstep and ask if I read the bible  
Look, I'm a single Mother right, so my life is just about survival  
I've got 2 kids here and a dog that all need shovels of food  
They are the only priority and I'm sorry if it sounds rude  
But you're a bloke right so you're great on causes and ideals  
But bloody useless for washing up, cleaning and meals  
Tell me, while you are our trying to show the world the light  
Are your kids bored at home at the moment? Am I right  
Yes, go back now and get them out, find them a tree to climb  
Play football anything, just give them some of your time  
You talking all about God the father is pretty sad  
If you are ignoring your own kids and not being a Dad!  
But if you are continuing up the road with your God talk  
Take our dog with you, she needs a good walk  
Go on — off you go, save my nieghbour from turning sinner  
I got to go inside to stop me from burning the dinner  
It may be mundane looking after kids and to you not very amazing  
But I think it's more productive than selling God like double glazing  
Now bugger off!

Feb 01