

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Marriott Edgar**

**- poems -**

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## Albert and His Savings

One day, little Albert Ramsbottom  
To see 'ow much money 'e'd got  
Stuck a knife in 'is money-box slot 'ole  
And fiddled and fished out the lot.

It amounted to fifteen and fourpence  
Which 'e found by a few simple sums  
Were ninety two tuppenny ices  
Or twice that in penn'orths of gums.

The sound of the chinkin' of money  
Soon brought father's 'ead round the door  
He said, "Whats that there, on the table?"  
Albert said it were, "Fifteen and four."

"You're not going to spend all that money..."  
Said Pa, in an admonitory tone  
"On toffee an' things for your stomach."  
Said Mother, "Why not?... it's his own."

Said Pa, "Nay, with that fifteen shillings,  
We'll buy National Savings and then...  
In five years we'll have seventeen and six  
And one pound and sixpence, in ten!"

Young Albert weren't what you'd call eager  
He saw his sweet dreams fade away,  
Ma said, "Let 'im 'ave the odd fourpence."  
Pa lovingly answered, "Nay... nay!"

"It's our duty in crisis... what's 'appened  
For every child, woman and man  
To strain every muscle and sinew  
To raise every penny we can!"

He said, "Even this little fourpence...  
Might help us, the Germans to drub!"  
Then 'e dropped the four coins in 'is pocket  
And made for the neighbouring pub.

These words stirred the 'eart of young Albert  
He made up 'is mind then and there  
To take up 'is part in the straining  
And sell everything 'e could spare.

So off 'e went down to the junk shop  
With some toys and a flashlamp, he'd got.  
And the stick with the 'orses 'ead 'andle  
He received half a crown for the lot.

He went off to the Post Office counter  
Where National Savings was bought

But found that they cost fifteen shillings  
Which meant he were twelve and six short.

The little lad wasn't down 'earted  
He went off without wastin' words  
And sold 'is dad's smoking companion  
And 'is Mother's glass case of stuffed birds.

At the Post Office counter they gave 'im  
A certificate all crisp and clean  
Then back 'e went 'ome, to his parents  
To say what a good boy he'd been.

They didn't 'alf shout, when he told 'em  
By Gumm... but 'e were in the wars  
But at finish, they 'ad to forgive 'im  
It were all done in such a grand cause.

There's a moral, of course. to this story  
That's pointing to you and to me...  
Let's all be young Alberts and tend  
To defend the right to be free.

Marriott Edgar

## Albert and the 'Eadsman

On young Albert Ramsbottom's birthday  
His parents asked what he'd like most;  
He said to see t' Tower of London  
And gaze upon Anne Boleyn's ghost.

They thowt this request were unusual  
And at first to refuse were inclined,  
'Til Pa said a trip t' metrollopse  
Might broaden the little lad's mind.

They took charrybank up to London  
And got there at quarter to fower,  
Then seeing as pubs wasn't open  
They went straight away to the tower.

They didn't think much to the buildin'  
'T weren't what they'd been led to suppose,  
And the 'Bad Word' Tower didn't impress them,  
They said Blackpool had got one of those.

At last Albert found a Beefeater  
And filled the old chap with alarm.  
By asking for Ghost of Anne Boleyn  
As carried her 'ead 'neath her arm.

Said Beefeater 'You ought to come Fridays  
If it's ghost of Anne Boleyn you seek,  
Her union now limits her output  
And she only gets one walk a week.

'But,' he said, 'if it's ghosts that you're after,  
There's Lady Jane Grey's to be seen,  
She runs around chased by the 'Eadsman  
At midnight on th' old Tower Green.'

They waited on t' green till near midnight,  
Then thinking they'd time for a sup,  
They took out what food they'd brought with them  
And waited for t' ghost to turn up.

On the first stroke of twelve, up jumped Albert,  
His mouth full of cold, dripping toast,  
With his stick with the 'orses 'ead 'andle  
He pointed, and said 'Here's the ghost!'

They felt their skins going all goosey  
As Lady Jane's Spectre drew near  
And Albert fair swallowed his tonsils  
When the 'Eadsman an' all did appear.

The 'Eadsman chased Jane round the grass patch  
They saw his axe flash in the moon

And seeing as poor lass were 'eadless  
They wondered what what next he would prune.

He suddenly caught sight of Albert  
As midnight was on its last chime  
As he lifted his axe, father murmured  
'We'll get the insurance this time.'

At that, Mother rose, taking umbridge;  
She said, 'Put that cleaver away.  
You're not cutting our Albert's 'ead off,  
Yon collar were clean on today.

The brave little lad stood undaunted  
'Til the ghost were within half a pace.  
Then taking the toast he were eating,  
Slapped it, dripping side down, in his face.

'T were a proper set-back for the 'Eadsman  
He let out one 'owl of despair,  
Then taking his ladyfriend with him  
He disappeared - just like that, there.

When Pa saw the way as they vanished  
He trembled with fear and looked blue,  
'Til Ma went and patted his shoulder  
An' said, 'Sallright lad, we saw it too.'

Some say 'twere the drippin' as done it,  
From a roast leg of mutton it came,  
And as th' 'Eadsman had been a Beefeater  
They reckon he vanished from shame.

And around Tower Green, from that moment,  
They've ne're seen a sign of the ghost,  
But when t' Beefeaters go on night duty,  
They take slices of cold drippin' toast.

Marriott Edgar

## Albert and the Lion

There's a famous seaside place called Blackpool,  
That's noted for fresh air and fun,  
And Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom  
Went there with young Albert, their son.

A grand little lad was young Albert,  
All dressed in his best; quite a swell  
With a stick with an 'orse's 'ead 'andle,  
The finest that Woolworth's could sell.

They didn't think much of the Ocean:  
The waves, they were fiddlin' and small,  
There was no wrecks and nobody drowned,  
Fact, nothing to laugh at at all.

So, seeking for further amusement,  
They paid and went into the Zoo,  
Where they'd Lions and Tigers and Camels,  
And old ale and sandwiches too.

There were one great big Lion called Wallace;  
His nose were all covered with scars -  
He lay in a somnolent posture,  
With the side of his face on the bars.

Now Albert had heard about Lions,  
How they was ferocious and wild -  
To see Wallace lying so peaceful,  
Well, it didn't seem right to the child.

So straightway the brave little feller,  
Not showing a morsel of fear,  
Took his stick with its 'orse's 'ead 'andle  
And pushed it in Wallace's ear.

You could see that the Lion didn't like it,  
For giving a kind of a roll,  
He pulled Albert inside the cage with 'im,  
And swallowed the little lad 'ole.

Then Pa, who had seen the occurrence,  
And didn't know what to do next,  
Said 'Mother! Yon Lion's 'et Albert',  
And Mother said 'Well, I am vexed!'

Then Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom -  
Quite rightly, when all's said and done -  
Complained to the Animal Keeper,  
That the Lion had eaten their son.

The keeper was quite nice about it;  
He said 'What a nasty mishap.

Are you sure that it's your boy he's eaten?  
Pa said "Am I sure? There's his cap!"

The manager had to be sent for.  
He came and he said 'What's to do?'  
Pa said 'Yon Lion's 'et Albert,  
'And 'im in his Sunday clothes, too.'

Then Mother said, 'Right's right, young feller;  
I think it's a shame and a sin,  
For a lion to go and eat Albert,  
And after we've paid to come in.'

The manager wanted no trouble,  
He took out his purse right away,  
Saying 'How much to settle the matter?'  
And Pa said "What do you usually pay?"

But Mother had turned a bit awkward  
When she thought where her Albert had gone.  
She said 'No! someone's got to be summonsed' -  
So that was decided upon.

Then off they went to the P'lice Station,  
In front of the Magistrate chap;  
They told 'im what happened to Albert,  
And proved it by showing his cap.

The Magistrate gave his opinion  
That no one was really to blame  
And he said that he hoped the Ramsbottoms  
Would have further sons to their name.

At that Mother got proper blazing,  
'And thank you, sir, kindly,' said she.  
'What waste all our lives raising children  
To feed ruddy Lions? Not me!'

Marriott Edgar

## Albert Down Under

Albert were what you'd call "thwarted".  
He had long had an ambition, which...  
Were to save up and go to Australia,  
The saving up that were the hitch.

He'd a red money box on the pot shelf,  
A post office thing made of tin,  
But with him and his Dad and the bread knife,  
It never had anything in.

He were properly held up for bobbins,  
As the folk in the mill used to say,  
Till he hit on a simple solution -  
He'd go as a young stowaway.

He studied the sailing lists daily,  
And at last found a ship as would do.  
"S.S. Tosser:", a freighter from Fleetwood,  
Via Cape Horn to Woolloomooloo.

He went off next evening to Fleetwood,  
And found her there loaded and coaled,  
Slipped over the side in the darkness,  
And downstairs and into the hold.

The hold it were choked up with cargo,  
He groped with his hands in the gloom,  
Squeezed through bars of what felt like a grating,  
And found he had plenty of room.

Some straw had been spilled in one corner,  
He thankfully threw himself flat,  
He thought he could hear someone breathing,  
But he were too tired to fret about that.

When he woke they were out in mid-ocean,  
He turned and in light which were dim,  
Looked straight in the eyes of a lion,  
That were lying there looking at him.

His heart came right up in his tonsils,  
As he gazed at that big yellow face.  
Then it smiled and they both said together,  
"Well, isn't the world a small place?"

The lion were none other than Wallace,  
He were going to Sydney, too.  
To fulfil a short starring engagement  
In a cage at Taronga Park Zoo.

As they talked they heard footsteps approaching,  
"Someone comes" whispered Wallace, "Quick, hide".

He opened his mouth to the fullest,  
And Albert sprang nimbly inside.

'Twere Captain on morning inspection,  
When he saw Wallace shamming to doze,  
He picked up a straw from his bedding,  
And started to tickle his nose.

Now Wallace could never stand tickling,  
He let out a mumbling roar,  
And before he could do owt about it,  
He'd sneezed Albert out on the floor.

The Captain went white to the wattles,  
He said, "I'm a son of a gun".  
He had heard of beasts bringing up children,  
But were first time as he'd seen it done.

He soon had the radio crackling,  
And flashing the tale far and wide,  
Of the lad who'd set out for Australia,  
Stowed away in a lion's inside.

The quay it were jammed with reporters,  
When they docked on Australian soil.  
They didn't pretend to believe it,  
But 'twere too good a story to spoil.

And Albert soon picked up the language,  
When he first saw the size of the fruit,  
There was no more "by gum" now or "Champion",  
It were "Whacko!", "Too right!" and "You beaut!".

They gave him a wonderful fortnight,  
Then from a subscription they made,  
Sent him back as a "Parcel for Britain",  
Carriage forward, and all ex's paid!

Marriott Edgar

## Albert's Return

You've `eard `ow young Albert Ramsbottom  
At the zoo up at Blackpool one year  
With a stick with an `orse's `ead `andle  
Gave a lion a poke in the ear?

The name of the lion was Wallace,  
The poke in the ear made `im wild  
And before you could say "Bob's yer uncle"  
E'd upped and `e'd swallowed the child.

`E were sorry the moment `e done it;  
With children `e'd always been chums,  
And besides, `e'd no teeth in his muzzle,  
And `e couldn't chew Albert on't gums.

`E could feel the lad movin' inside `im  
As `e lay on `is bed of dried ferns;  
And it might `ave been little lad's birthday-  
E wished `im such `appy returns.

But Albert kept kickin' and fightin'-  
And Wallace got up, feelin' bad.  
Decided 'twere time that `e started  
To stage a comeback for the lad.

Then puttin' `ead down in one corner,  
On `is front paws `e started to walk;  
And `e coughed, and `e sneezed, and `e gargled  
`Till Albert shot out - like a cork!

Now Wallace felt better directly  
And `is figure once more became lean.  
But the only difference with Albert Was,  
`is face and `is `ands were quite clean.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Ramsbottom  
`Ad gone back to their tea, feelin' blue.  
Ma said, "I feel down in the mouth, like."  
" Pa said, "Aye, I bet Albert does, too."

Said Mother, "It just goes to show yer  
That the future is never revealed;  
If I'd thowt we was goin' to lose `im,  
I'd `ave not `ad `is boots soled and `eeled."

"Let's look on the bright side," said Father,  
"Wot can't be `elped must be endured;  
Each cloud `as a silvery lining,  
And we did `ave young Albert insured."

A knock on the door came that moment  
As Father these kind words did speak.

`Twas the man from Prudential - `e'd come for  
Their tuppence per person per week.

When Father saw `oo `ad been knockin',  
`E laughed, and `e kept laughin` so -  
The man said "`Ere, wot's there to laugh at?"  
Pa said "You'll laugh and all when you know!"

"Excuse `im for laughing," said Mother,  
"But really, things `appen so strange -  
Our Albert's been et by a lion;  
You've got to pay us for a change!"

Said the young man from the Prudential:  
"Now, come, come, let's understand this-  
You don't mean to say that you've lost `im?"  
Pa said "Oh, no, we know where `e is!"

When the young man `ad `eard all the details,  
A purse from `is pocket he drew  
And `e paid them with interest and bonus  
The sum of nine pounds, four and two.

Pa `ad scarce got `is `and on the money  
When a face at the window they see-  
And Mother cried "Eee, look, it's Albert!"  
And Father said "Aye, it would be."

Albert came in all excited,  
And started `is story to give;  
And Pa said "I'll never trust lions  
Again, not as long as I live."

The young man from the Prudential  
To pick up the money began  
But Father said "`ere, wait a moment,  
Don't be in a `urry, young man."

Then giving young Albert a shilling,  
`E said "`Ere, pop off back to the zoo;  
Get your stick with the `orse's `ead `andle-  
Go and see wot the tigers can do!"

Marriott Edgar

## Asparagus

Mr. Ramsbottom went to the races,  
A thing as he'd ne'er done before,  
And as luck always follers beginners,  
Won five pounds, no-less and no-more.

He felt himself suddenly tempted  
To indulge in some reckless orgee,  
So he went to a caffy-a-teerer  
And had a dressed crab with his tea.

He were crunching the claws at the finish  
And wondering what next he would do,  
Then his thoughts turned to home and to Mother,  
And what she would say when she knew.

For Mother were dead against racing  
And said as she thought 'twere a sin  
For people to gamble their money  
Unless they were certain to win.

These homely domestic reflections  
Seemed to cast quite a gloom on Pa's day  
He thought he'd best take home a present  
And square up the matter that way.

' Twere a bit of a job to decide on  
What best to select for this 'ere,  
So he started to look in shop winders  
In hopes as he'd get some idea.

He saw some strange stuff in a fruit shop  
Like leeks with their nobby ends gone,  
It were done up in bundles like firewood-  
Said Pa to the Shopman, "What's yon?"

"That's Ass-paragus-what the Toffs eat"  
Were the answer; said Pa "That 'll suit,  
I'd best take a couple of bundles,  
For Mother's a bobby for fruit."

He started off home with his purchase  
And pictured Ma all the next week  
Eating sparagus fried with her bacon  
Or mashed up in bubble-and-squeak.

He knew when she heard he'd been racing  
She'd very nigh talk him to death,  
So he thought as he'd call in the ' Local'  
To strengthen his nerve and his breath.

He had hardly got up to the counter  
When a friend of his walked in the bar,

He said "What ye got in the bundle?"  
"A present for Mother," said Pa.

It's 'sparagus stuff what the Toffs eat "  
His friend said "It's a rum-looking plant,  
Can I have the green ends for my rabbits?"  
said Pa "Aye, cut off what you want.

He cut all the tips off one bundle,  
Then some more friends arrived one by one,  
And all of them seemed to keep rabbits  
Pa had no green ends left when they'd done.

When he got home the 'ouse were in dark ness,  
So he slipped in as sly as a fox,  
Laid the 'sparagus on kitchen table  
And crept up to bed in his socks.

He got in without waking Mother,  
A truly remarkable feat,  
And pictured her telling the neighbours  
As 'twere 'sparagus-what the toffs eat.

But when he woke up in the morning  
It were nigh on a quarter to ten,  
There were no signs of Mother, or breakfast  
Said Pa, "What's she done with her-sen?"

He shouted "What's up theer in t' kitchen?"  
She replied, "You do well to enquire,  
Them bundles of chips as you brought home  
Is so damp... I can't light the fire."

Marriott Edgar

## Balbus

I'll tell you the story of Balbus,  
You know, him as builded a wall;  
I'll tell you the reason he built it,  
And the place where it happened an' all.

This 'ere Balbus, though only a Tackler,  
Were the most enterprising of men;  
He'd heard Chicken Farms were lucrative,  
So he went out and purchased a hen.

'Twere a White Wyandot he called Mabel,  
At laying she turned out a peach,  
And her eggs being all double-yoked ones  
He reckoned they'd fetch twopence each.

When he took them along to the market  
And found that the eggs that sold best  
Were them as came over from China  
He were vexed, but in no ways depressed.

For Balbus, though only a Tackler,  
In business were far from a dunce,  
So he packed Mabel up in a basket  
And started for China at once.

When he got there he took a small holding,  
And selecting the sunniest part,  
He lifted the lid of the basket  
And said "Come on, lass... make a start!"

The 'en needed no second biddin',  
She sat down and started to lay;  
She'd been saving up all the way over  
And laid sixteen eggs, straight away.

When the Chinamen heard what had happened  
Their cheeks went the colour of mud,  
They said it were sheer mass production  
As had to be nipped in the bud.

They formed themselves in a committee  
And tried to arrive at some course  
Whereby they could limit the output  
Without doing harm to the source.

At the finish they came to t' conclusion  
That the easiest road they could take  
Were to fill the 'en's nest up wi' scrap-iron  
So as fast as she laid eggs they'd break.

When Balbus went out the next morning  
To fetch the eggs Mabel had laid

He found nowt but shells and albumen  
He were hipped, but in no ways dismayed.

For Balbus, though only a Tackler,  
He'd a brain that were fertile and quick  
He bought all the scrap-iron in t' district  
To stop them repeating the trick.

But next day, to his great consternation  
He were met with another reverse,  
For instead of old iron they'd used clinker  
And the eggs looked the same, or worse.

'Twere a bit of a set-back for Balbus,  
But he wasn't downhearted at all,  
And when t' Chinamen came round next evening  
They found he were building a wall.

"That won't keep us out of your 'en 'ouse"  
Said one, with a smug kind of grin;  
It's not for that purpose," said Balbus,  
"When it's done, it will keep you lot in."

The Chinamen all burst out laffing,  
They thowt as he'd gone proper daft  
But Balbus got on wi' his building  
And said "He laffed last who last laffed."

Day by day Balbus stuck to his building,  
And his efforts he never did cease  
Till he'd builded the Great Wall of China  
So as Mabel could lay eggs in peace.

Marriott Edgar

## Canute the Great

I'll tell of Canute, King of England,  
A native of Denmark was he,  
His hobbies was roving and raiding  
And paddling his feet in the sea.

By trade he were what's called a Viking,  
Every summer he'd visit our shore,  
Help himself to whatever he wanted,  
And come back in the autumn for more.

These trips always showed him a profit,  
But what stumped him to know was this 'ere...  
Where the English folk got all the money,  
He came and took off them each year.

After duly considering the matter,  
He concluded as how his best course,  
Were to have an invasion of England,  
And tap the supply at its source.

He got other Vikings to join him,  
With a promise of plunder and spoil,  
And raked up atrocity stories,  
To bring all their blood to the boil.

They landed one morning at Weymouth,  
And waited for fight to begin,  
While their foe, Ethelred the Unready,  
Found his army and got it fell in.

When the battle were done, Crown of England,  
Changed heads, so the history book states,  
From Ethelred's seven-and-a-quarter,  
To King Canutes six-and-five-eights.

The Vikings was cheered as the winners,  
Ethelred, he went somewhere and died,  
And Canute, to his lasting atonement...  
Made the widow, Queen Emma, his bride.

She started to teach him his manners,  
To drink without wetting his nose,  
Put his hand to his mouth and say "Pardon!",  
Every time the occasion arose.

She said his companions was vulgar,  
His habits more easy than free,  
Made him promise no more to disgrace her,  
By paddling his feet in the sea.

At the time this 'ere promise meant nothing,  
It were made in the cool of the spring,

But when summer came in with a heat wave,  
T' were a totally different thing.

He moved his court down to the seaside,  
Where they took off their shoes and their socks,  
And rushed to the water and left him,  
Alone on his throne on the rocks.

Said one, "Come on King, have a paddle,  
I'll look after your sceptre and crown."  
He replied, "Nay, I promised the missus,  
And I can't let the old... lady down."

"No need to do that," said the Tempter,  
"The tide's coming in, as you see;  
You promised you wouldn't go to it,  
But you can't stop it coming to thee!"

And that's how it happened... that later,  
When Emma came over the sands,  
She found Canute knee deep in water,  
Trying to shush the sea back with his hands.

For not letting on that he'd seen her,  
He was chiding each wave as it came,  
Saying, "Thus far, my lad, and no further!"  
'Til Emma said, "What is this game?"

He replied, These 'ere flatterers told me,  
That the sea would obey me, and so,  
I'm giving them this demonstration,  
To show what a fat lot they know."

"You're doing quite right," shouted Emma,  
"It's time someone made them look small!"  
Then she took off her shoes and her stockings,  
And started to paddle an' all.

Marriott Edgar

## Fair Rosamond

You've heard of King Henry II  
And the story of how he got fond  
Of one of his customer's daughters,  
A lass called the " Fair Rosamond."

'Twere a lovely romance while it lasted,  
The course of true love ran serene,  
Till some nosey-parkering varlet  
Started carrying tales to the Queen.

The Queen were at first incred-u-lous.  
She said "What a tale to invent!"  
The King would not stoop to such baseness  
At any rate, not during Lent."

But one morning she picked up a doublet  
As he'd dropped on his bedroom settee;  
It had three golden hairs on the shoulder  
And a strong smell of 'Soir de Patee."

She went to the King in a passion  
And showed him this evidence clear,  
And swore by her distaff and wimple  
That she weren't having none of that there.

She said " If I catch that young woman,  
She'll leave no more hairs on your coat-  
Her trying to pinch other folks' monarchs-  
I'll give her a swim in the moat.

So he took Rosie off to the country,  
To an old-fashioned manor of his,  
With an "'ampton Court Maze "in the garden  
As he kept for occasions like this.

But the Queen wasn't fooled for a moment,  
She knew all about Henry's ways;  
She slipped off herself the next morning  
And secretly watched that there maze.

She were hiding in t 'macaracapa  
When Rosie came out for the milk,  
And she fixed to her dress as she passed her  
The end of a bobbin of silk.

Poor Rosie went back not suspecting  
The trail she were leaving behind,  
And the Queen slowly followed her gloating  
At what she expected to find.

The King he were toasting a muffin,  
And Rosie were wetting the tea,

When in walked the Queen her face shining  
With a look of malevolent glee.

She'd a basin of poison in one hand,  
In the other, a glittering knife  
The King kind of goggled a moment,  
Then turned and said " Rose... meet the wife!"

The Queen shoved the basin at Rosie,  
And held the knife out by its point  
It were plain she had no' but two choices,  
The soup or a cut off the joint.

The Fair Rosamond begged for mercy.  
She said, "What you've heard is not true,  
Our friendship were purely platonic."  
A yarn which in them days was new.

The King told the same tale as Rosie  
And if that's not the truth, Queen," he cried,  
May I die on this spot where I'm standing !  
As he said it he skipped to one side.

The Queen at the finish believed them,  
But to save further messing around,  
She packed Rosie off to a Convent  
And had the maze burnt to the ground.

Marriott Edgar

## George and the Dragon

I'll tell you the tale of an old country pub  
As fancied itself up to date,  
It had the word " Garage" wrote on t' stable door  
And a petrol pump outside the gate.

The " George and the Dragon" were t' name of the pub,  
And it stood in a spot wild and bleak,  
Where nowt ever seemed to be passing that way  
Except Carrier's cart once a week.

The Carrier's cart were a sturdy old Ford  
And its driver were known as " Old Joe  
He had passed pub each week but he'd never been in,  
It's name even he didn't know.

One cold winter night, about quarter to one,  
He were driving home over the moor,  
And had just reached the pub, when his engine stopped dead  
A thing it had ne'er done before.

He lifted the bonnet and fiddled around  
And gave her a bit of a crank;  
When he looked at his petrol he found what were wrong,  
There wasn't a drop in the tank.

He had eight miles to go and 'twere starting to rain,  
And he thought he were there for the night,  
Till he saw the word " Garage" wrote on t' stable door;  
Then he said, " Lizzie, Lass... we're all right."

He went up to t' pub and he hammered at door  
Till a voice up above said " Hello!"  
It were t' Publican's Wife-she said,  
"Now what's to do?", "I've run out of petrol," said Joe.

She said " Who are you? " He said " Carrier Joe."  
" Oh, so that's who it is," she replied  
You've been passing this door now for close on ten years  
And never once set foot inside."

"A nice time of night to come knocking folks up,  
She continued. "Away with your truck,  
" You'd best get your petrol where you buy your beer...  
" You only come here when you re stuck."

Said Joe, "Aye, I'll go if you'll sell me some fuel,  
"I can't start my engine without.  
"I'm willing to pay." but she told him to go  
Where he'd get his fuel for nowt.

"Coom, coom, Lass!" said Joe, conci-latory like,  
"Let bygones be bygones, and when

I come round next time I'll look in."  
She said, "Oh, Well, your petrol can wait until then."

With these few remarks th' old girl took in her head  
And slammed winder to in his face;  
He took a look round and for t' very first time  
He noticed the name of the place.

He picked up some pebbles he found in the road  
And tossed them against winder pane,  
And before very long lattice opened above  
And out came the old girl again.

What d'ye want? " she enquired. And " Not you," Joe replied,  
For this treatment had fair raised his gorge  
"I see George and t' Dragon's the name on the house,  
"And I'd just like a word now with George."

Marriott Edgar

## Goalkeeper Joe

Joe Dunn were a bobby for football  
He gave all his time to that sport,  
He played for the West Wigan Whippets,  
On days when they turned out one short.

He'd been member of club for three seasons  
And had grumbled again and again,  
Cos he found only time that they'd used him,  
Were when it were pouring with rain!

He felt as his talents were wasted  
When each week his job seemed to be  
No but minding the clothes for the others  
And chucking clods at referee!

So next time selection committee  
Came round to ask him for his sub  
He told them if they didn't play him,  
He'd transfer to some other club.

Committee they coaxed and cudgelled him  
But found he'd have none of their shifts  
So they promised to play him next weekend  
In match against Todmorden Swifts.

This match were the plum of the season  
An annual fixture it stood,  
'T were reckoned as good as a cup tie  
By them as liked plenty of blood!

The day of the match dawned in splendour  
A beautiful morning it were  
With a fog drifting up from the brick fields  
And a drizzle of rain in the air.

The Whippets made Joe their goalkeeper  
A thing as weren't wanted at all  
For they knew once battle had started  
They'd have no time to mess with the ball!

Joe stood by the goal posts and shivered  
While the fog round his legs seemed to creep  
'Til feeling neglected and lonely  
He leant back and went fast asleep.

He dreamt he were playing at Wembley  
And t'roar of a thundering cheer  
He were kicking a goal for the Whippets  
When he woke with a clout in his ear!

He found 'twere the ball that had struck him  
And inside the net there it lay

But as no one had seen this `ere `appen  
He punted it back into play!

'Twere the first ball he'd punted in anger  
His feelings he couldn't restrain  
Forgetting as he were goalkeeper  
He ran out and kicked it again!

Then after the ball like a rabbit  
He rushed down the field full of pride  
He reckoned if nobody stopped him  
Then `appen he'd score for his side.

`Alf way down he bumped into his captain  
Who weren't going to let him go by  
But Joe, like Horatio Nelson  
Put a fist to the Captain's blind eye!

On he went 'til the goal lay before him  
Then stopping to get himself set  
He steadied the ball, and then kicked it  
And landed it right in the net!

The fog seemed to lift at that moment  
And all eyes were turned on the lad  
The Whippets seemed kind of dumbfounded  
While the Swifts started cheering like mad!

'Twere his own goal as he'd kicked the ball through  
He'd scored for his foes `gainst his friends  
For he'd slept through the referee's whistle  
And at half time he hadn't changed ends!

Joe was transferred from the West Wigan Whippets  
To the Todmorden Swifts, where you'll see  
Still minding the clothes for the others  
And chucking clods at referee!

Marriott Edgar

## Gunner Joe

I'll tell you a seafaring story,  
Of a lad who won honour and fame  
Wi' Nelson at Battle 'Trafalgar,  
Joe Moggeridge, that were his name.

He were one of the crew of the Victory,  
His job when a battle begun  
Was to take cannon balls out o' basket  
And shove 'em down front end o' gun.

One day him and Nelson were boxing,  
The compass, like sailor lads do.  
When 'Ardy comes up wi' a spyglass,  
And pointing, says "'Ere, take a screw!"

They looked to were 'Ardy were pointing,  
And saw lots o' ships in a row.  
Joe says abrupt like but respectful,  
"'Oratio lad, yon's the foe."

'What say we attack 'em?' says Nelson,  
Says Joe 'Nay lad, not today.'  
And 'Ardy says, 'Aye, well let's toss up.'  
'Oratio answers 'Okay.'

They tossed... it were heads for attacking,  
And tails for t'other way 'bout.  
Joe lent them his two-headed penny,  
So the answer was never in doubt.

When penny came down 'ead side uppards,  
They was in for a do it were plain,  
And Joe murmured 'Shiver me timbers.'  
And Nelson kissed 'Ardy again.

And then, taking flags out o' locker,  
'E strung out a message on high.  
'T were all about England and duty,  
Crew thought they was 'ung out to dry.

They got the guns ready for action,  
And that gave 'em trouble enough.  
They 'adn't been fired all the summer,  
And touch-holes were bunged up wi' fluff.

Joe's cannon, it weren't 'alf a corker,  
The cannon balls went three foot round.  
They wasn't no toy balloons either,  
They weighed close on sixty-five pound.

Joe, selecting two of the largest,  
Was going to load double for luck.

When a hot shot came in thro' the porthole,  
And a gunpowder barrel got struck.

By gum! there weren't 'alf an explosion,  
The gun crew were filled with alarm.  
As out of the porthole went Joseph,  
Wi' a cannon ball under each arm.

At that moment up came the 'Boat-swine'  
He says 'Where's Joe?' Gunner replied...  
'E's taken two cannon balls with 'im,  
And gone for a breather outside.'

'Do y' think he'll be long?' said the 'Boat-swine'  
The gunner replied, 'If as 'ow,  
'E comes back as quick as 'e left us,  
'E should be 'ere any time now.

And all this time Joe, treading water,  
Was trying 'is 'ardest to float.  
'E shouted thro' turmoil of battle,  
'Tell someone to lower a boat.'

'E'd come to the top for assistance,  
Then down to the bottom he'd go;  
This up and down kind of existence,  
Made everyone laugh... except Joe.

At last 'e could stand it no longer,  
And next time 'e came to the top.  
'E said 'If you don't come and save me,  
I'll let these 'ere cannon balls drop.'

'T were Nelson at finish who saved him,  
And 'e said Joe deserved the V.C.  
But finding 'e 'adn't one 'andy,  
'E gave Joe an egg for 'is tea.

And after the battle was over,  
And vessel was safely in dock.  
The sailors all saved up their coupons,  
And bought Joe a nice marble clock.

Marriott Edgar

## Henry the Seventh

Henry the Seventh of England  
Wasn't out of the Royal top drawer,  
The only connection of which he could boast,  
He were King's nephew's brother-in-law.

It were after the Wars of the Roses  
That he came to the front, as it were,  
When on strength of his having slain Richard the Third  
He put himself up as his heir.

T'were a bit of a blow to the Barons  
When Henry aspired to the Throne,  
And some who'd been nursing imperial hopes  
Started pushing out claims of their own.

But they didn't get far with their scheming,  
For the moment the matter were pressed  
A stroke of the pen took them off to the Tower,  
Where a stroke of the axe did the rest.

A feller they called Perkin Warbeck  
Was the one who led Henry a dance,  
To make sure that nowt awkward should happen to him  
He worked from an office in France.

He claimed to be one of the Princes  
As were smothered to death in the Tower.  
His tale was that only his brother was killed  
And that he had escaped the seas ower.

Henry knew the appeal of the Princes  
Was a strong one for Perkin to make,  
And he reckoned he'd best have a chat with the lad  
And find out the least he would take.

In reply to his kind invitation  
Perkin said he'd he happy to call,  
But he'd bring his own escort of ten thousand men  
And a hundred pipers an' all.

This reply put the King in a passion  
He swore as he'd stop Perkin's fun,  
Then he offered a fortune per annum to him  
As could tell him how his could be done.

Then up spoke the bold Lambert Simne  
The King's private scullion he were,  
He said: "Just one word in thy ear 'ole, O King,  
I've a plan as will stop all this 'ere."

Then he took the King up in a corner,  
Where no one could hear what they said,

He hadn't got far when King started to laff  
And he laffed till he had to he bled.

T 'were a plan to anticipate Perkin,  
By getting in first with these tales,  
Start another rebellion before he arrived  
And take the wind out of his sails.

And so Lambert Simnel's rebellion  
Made its fateful debut in the North  
Experts disagree who he made out to be,  
John the Second or Richard the Fourth.

T 'was surprising how many believed him  
They flocked to his flag like one man,  
For in them days the folk would do owt for a change,  
And their motto was, " San fairy ann."

It were quite a success this rebellion  
Till t'were routed by Henry at Stoke,  
And Lambert were taken and made to confess  
That his parents was working class folk.

The public forgave this deception,  
The thing that made them proper mad  
Was a twopenny increase on every one's rates  
To pay for the fun they had had.

And so when Peter Warbeck came over  
Expecting his praise to be sung,  
He was greeted, defeated, escheated, unseated,  
Maltreated and finally hung.

And the Baron went back to his castle,  
The Peasant went back to his herd,  
Lambert Simnel went back to his scullion's job  
Because Henry went back on his word.

Marriott Edgar

## Joe Ramsbottom

Joe Ramshotom rented a bit of a farm  
From its owner, Squire Goslett his name;  
And the Gosletts came over with William the First,  
And found Ramsbottoms here when they came.

One day Joe were ploughing his three-acre field  
When the front of his plough hit a rock,  
And on closer inspection o' t' damage he found  
As the coulter had snapped wi' the shock.

He'd got a spare coulter at home in his shed,  
But that were some distance away,  
And he reckoned by t' time he had been there and back  
He'd have wasted best part of the day.

The accident 'appened not far from the place  
Where the Squire had his sumptuous abode;  
He thought he might borrow a coulter from him,  
And save going back all that road.

He were going to ask... but he suddenly stopped,  
And he said "Nay-I'd better not call;  
He might think it cheek I borrowed from him,  
I'd best get my own after all."

He were going off back when he turned to himself  
And said "That's a gormless idea;  
The land you were ploughing belongs to the Squire,  
It were 'is rock as caused all this 'ere!"

This 'eartened Joe up, so he set off again,  
But he very soon stopped as before,  
And he said 'Happen Squire'II have comp'ny to tea,  
Nay I'd, better go round to t' back.

Then he answered himself in a manner quite stern  
And said "Here's a nice how-de-do!  
You can manage without him when all's said and done,  
And where would he be without you?"

Joe knew this were right and he knew it were just,  
But he didn't seem happy somehow,  
So he said "Well, there's no harm in paying a call,  
And I needn't say owt about plough."

This suggestion that he were afraid of the Squire  
Were most deeply resented by Joe;  
He said "Right! I'll show you... I'll go up at once,  
At the worst he can only say 'No.'"

Then he said "After all as I've done in the past  
He would have a nerve to decline;

He ought to be thankful to give me his plough,  
Seein' damage his rock did to mine.

Then he said "Who is he To be puffed up wi' pride,  
And behave as if he were King Dick  
He's only a farmer the same as myself,  
As I'll tell him an' all- Jolly quick."

Then he turned round and looked himself straight in the face,  
And he said "What you're scared of beats me;  
Ramsbottoms was landlords when Gosletts was nowt,  
And it's him should be working for thee!"

Then he said "I'm surprised at myself, so I am,  
To think I should so condescend  
As to come hat in hand to a feller like 'im  
And ask if he's owt he can lend."

This argument brought him to Squire's front door,  
It were open and Squire stood inside;  
He said "Hello, Joe... What brings thee right up here?"  
"You'll know in a tick," Joe replied.

He said "P'raps you think yourself better than me,  
Well, I'm telling you straight that you're not  
And I don't want your coulter... Your plough-or your farm,  
You can-do what you like with the lot."

Marriott Edgar

## Jonah and the Grampus

I'll tell you the story of Jonah,  
A really remarkable tale;  
A peaceful and humdrum existence he had  
Until one day he went for a sail.

The weather were grand when they started,  
But later at turn of the tide  
The wind started blowing, the water got rough,  
And Jonah felt funny inside.

When the ship started pitching and tossing  
He tried hard his feelings to smother,  
At last he just leant his head over the side  
And one thing seemed to bring up another.

When the sailors saw what he were doing  
It gave them a bit of a jar;  
They didn't mind trippers enjoying theirselves,  
But thowt this 'ere were going too far.

Said one "Is there nowt you can think on  
To stop you from feelin' so bad?"  
And Jonah said "Aye, lift me over the side  
And chuck me in, there's a good lad."

The sailor were not one to argue,  
He said "Happen you know what's best."  
Then he picked Jonah up by the seat of his pants  
And chucked him in, as per request.

A Grampus came up at that moment,  
And seeing the old man hard set,  
It swam to his side and it opened its mouth  
And said "Come in lad, out of the wet."

Its manner were kindly and pleading,  
As if to say R.S.V.P.  
Said Jonah "I've eaten a kipper or two,  
But I never thowt one would eat me."

The inside of Grampus surprised him,  
'Twere the first time he'd been behind scenes;  
He found 'commodation quite ample for one  
But it smelled like a tin of sardines.

Then over the sea they went cruising,  
And Jonah were filled with delight;  
With his eye to the blow-'ole in t'Grampus's head  
He watched ships that passed in the night.

"I'm tired of watching," said Jonah,  
"I'll rest for a minute or so."

"I'm afraid as you wont find your bed very soft,"  
Said the Grampus, "I've got a hard roe."

At that moment up came a whale boat,  
Said Jonah, "What's this 'ere we've struck?"  
"They're after my blubber," the Grampus replied,  
"You'd better 'old tight while I duck."

The water came in through the spy-'ole  
And hit Jonah's face a real slosher,  
He said, "Shut your blow-'ole!" and Grampus replied  
"I can't lad, it needs a new washer."

Jonah tried 'ard to bail out the water,  
But found all his efforts in vain,  
For as fast as he emptied the slops out through the gills  
They came in through the blow 'ole again.

When at finish they came to the surface  
Jonah took a look out and he saw  
They were stuck on a bit of a sandbank that lay  
One rod, pole or perch from the shore.

Said the Grampus, "We're in shallow water,  
I've brought you as far as I may;  
If you sit on the blow 'ole on top of my head  
I'll spout you the rest of the way."

So Jonah obeyed these instructions,  
And the Grampus his lungs did expand,  
Then blew out a fountain that lifted Jo' up  
And carried him safely to land.

There was tears in their eyes when they parted  
And each blew a kiss, a real big 'un,  
Then the Grampus went off with a swish of it's tail  
And Jonah walked back home to Wigan.

Marriott Edgar

## Little Aggie

When Joe Dove took his elephants out on the road  
He made each one hold fast with his trunk  
To the tail of the elephant walking in front  
To stop them from doing a bunk.

There were fifteen in all, so 'twere rather a job  
To get them linked up in a row,  
But once he had fixed 'em Joe knew they'd hold on,  
For an elephant never lets go.

The pace it was set by the big 'uns in front,  
'Twas surprising how fast they could stride,  
And poor little Aggie, the one at the back...  
Had to run till she very near died.

They were walking one Sunday from Blackpool to Crewe,  
They'd started at break of the day,  
Joe followed behind with a bagful of buns  
In case they got hungry on t'way.

They travelled along at a rattling good pace  
Over moorland and valley and plain,  
And poor little Aggie the one at the back  
Her trunk fairly creaked with the strain.

They came to a place where the railway crossed road,  
An ungated crossing it were,  
And they wasn't to know as the express was due  
At the moment that they landed there.

They was half way across when Joe saw the express-  
It came tearing along up the track-  
He tried hard to stop, but it wasn't much good,  
For an elephant never turns back.

He saw if he didn't do something at once  
The train looked like spoiling his troupe,  
So he ran on ahead and he waggled tho buns  
To show them they'd best hurry up

When they caught sight of buns they all started to run,  
And they soon got across at this gait,  
Except poor little Aggie-the one at the back,  
She were one second too late.

The express came dashing along at full speed,  
And caught her end on, fair and square  
She bounced off the buffers, turned head over heels,  
And lay with her legs in the air.

Joe thought she were dead when he saw her lyin' there,  
With the back of her head on the line

He knelt by her side, put his ear to her chest,  
And told her to say " ninety-nine."

She waggled her tail and she twiggled her trunk ;  
To show him as she were alive;  
She hadn't the strength for to say "ninety-nine,"  
She just managed a weak "eighty-five."

When driver of th' engine got down from his cab  
Joe said "Here's a nice howdedo,  
To see fifteen elephants ruined for life  
By a clumsy great driver like you."

Said the driver, "There's no need to mak' all this fuss,  
There's only one hit as I've seen."  
Joe said, "Aye, that's right, but they held on so tight  
You've pulled back end off t' other fourteen."

Joe still walks around with his elephant troupe,  
He got them patched up at the vet's,  
But Aggie won't walk at the back any more,  
'Cos an elephant never forgets.

Marriott Edgar

## Magna Carta

I'll tell of the Magna Charter  
As were signed at the Barons' command  
On Runningmead Island in t' middle of t' Thames  
By King John, as were known as "Lack Land."

Some say it were wrong of the Barons  
Their will on the King so to thrust,  
But you'll see if you look at both sides of the case  
That they had to do something, or bust.

For John, from the moment they crowned him,  
Started acting so cunning and sly,  
Being King, of course, he couldn't do wrong,  
But, by gum, he'd a proper good try.

He squandered the ratepayers' money,  
All their cattle and corn did he take,  
'Til there wasn't a morsel of bread in the land,  
And folk had to manage on cake.

The way he behaved to young Arthur  
Went to show as his feelings was bad;  
He tried to get Hubert to poke out his eyes,  
Which is no way to treat a young lad.

It were all right him being a tyrant  
To vassals and folks of that class,  
But he tried on his tricks with the Barons an' all,  
And that's where he made a 'faux pas'.

He started bombarding their castles,  
And burning them over their head,  
'Til there wasn't enough castles left to go round,  
And they had to sleep six in a bed.

So they went to the King in a body,  
And their spokesman, Fitzwalter by name,  
He opened the 'ole in his 'elmet and said,  
Conciliatory like, " What's the game?"

The King starts to shilly and shally,  
He sits and he haws and he hums,  
'Til the Barons in rage started gnashing their teeth,  
And them with no teeth gnashed their gums

Said Fitz, through the 'ole in his 'elmet,  
"It was you as put us in this plight."  
And the King having nothing to say to this, murmured  
"Leave your address and I'll write".

This angered the gallant Fitzwalter;  
He stamped on the floor with his foot,

And were starting to give John a rare ticking off,  
When the 'ole in his 'elmet fell shut.

"We'll get him a Magna Charter,"  
Said Fitz when his face he had freed;  
Said the Barons "That's right and if one's not enough,  
Get a couple and happen they'll breed."

So they set about making a Charter,  
When at finish they'd got it drawn up,  
It looked like a paper on cattle disease,  
Or the entries for t' Waterloo Cup.

Next day, King John, all unsuspecting,  
And having the afternoon free,  
To Runningmead Island had taken a boat,  
And were having some shrimps for his tea.

He'd just pulled the 'ead off a big 'un,  
And were pinching its tail with his thumb,  
When up came a barge load of Barons, who said,  
"We thought you'd be here so we've come"

When they told him they'd brought Magna Charter,  
The King seemed to go kind of limp,  
But minding his manners he took off his hat  
And said " Thanks very much, have a shrimp."

" You'd best sign at once," said Fitzwalter,  
" If you don't, I'll tell thee for a start  
The next coronation will happen quite soon,  
And you won't be there to take part."

So they spread Charter out on t' tea table,  
And John signed his name like a lamb,  
His writing in places was sticky and thick  
Through dipping his pen in the jam.

And it's through that there Magna Charter,  
As were signed by the Barons of old,  
That in England to-day we can do what we like,  
So long as we do what we're told.

Marriott Edgar

## Marksman Sam

When Sam Small joined the regiment,  
'E were no' but a raw recruit,  
And they marched 'im away one wint'ry day,  
'Is musket course to shoot.

They woke 'im up at the crack o' dawn,  
Wi' many a nudge and shake,  
'E were dreaming that t' Sergeant 'ad broke 'is neck,  
And 'e didn't want to wake.

Lieutenant Bird came on parade,  
And chided the lads for mooning,  
'E talked in a voice like a pound o' plums,  
'Is tonsils needed pruning.

"Move to the right by fours," he said,  
Crisp like but most severe,  
But Sam didn't know 'is right from 'is left,  
So pretended 'e didn't 'ear.

Said Lieutenant, "Sergeant, take this man's name."  
The Sergeant took out 'is pencil,  
'E were getting ashamed o' taking Sam's name,  
And were thinking o' cutting a stencil.

Sam carried a musket, a knapsack and coat,  
Spare boots that 'e'd managed to wangle,  
A 'atchet, a spade... in fact, as Sam said,  
'E'd got everything bar t'kitchen mangle.

"March easy men," Lieutenant cried,  
As the musket range grew near,  
"March easy me blushing Aunt Fanny," said Sam,  
"What a chance with all this 'ere."

When they told 'im to fire at five 'undred yards,  
Sam nearly 'ad a fit,  
For a six foot wall, or the Albert 'All,  
Were all 'e were likely to 'it.

'E'd fitted a cork in 'is musket end,  
To keep 'is powder dry,  
And 'e didn't remember to take it out,  
The first time 'e let fly.

'Is gun went off with a kind o' pop,  
Where 'is bullet went no-one knew,  
But next day they spoke of a tinker's moke,  
Being killed by a cork... in Crewe.

At three 'undred yards, Sam shut 'is eyes,  
And took a careful aim,

'E failed to score but the marker swore,  
And walked away quite lame.

At two 'undred yards, Sam fired so wild,  
That the Sergeant feared for 'is skin,  
And the lads all cleared int' t' neighbouring field,  
And started to dig 'emselves in.

"Ooh, Sergeant! I hear a scraping noise,"  
Said Sam, "What can it be?"  
The noise that 'e 'eard were lieutenant Bird,  
'Oo were climbing the nearest tree.

"Ooh, Sergeant!" said Sam, "I've 'it the bull!  
What price my shooting now?"  
Said the Sergeant, "A bull? Yer gormless fool,  
Yon isn't a bull... it's a cow!"

At fifty yards 'is musket kicked,  
And went off with a noise like a blizzard,  
And down came a crow looking fair surprised,  
With a ram-rod through 'is gizzard.

As 'e loaded 'is musket to fire agen,  
Said the Sergeant, "Don't waste shot!  
Yer'd best fix bayonets and charge, my lad,  
It's the only chance yer've got.

Sam kept loading 'is gun while the Sergeant spoke,  
Till the bullets peeped out of the muzzle,  
When all of a sudden it went off bang!  
What made it go were a puzzle.

The bullets flew out in a kind of a spray,  
And everything round got peppered,  
When they counted 'is score... 'e'd got eight bulls eyes,  
Four magpies, two lambs and a shepherd.

And the Sergeant for this got a D.C.M.  
And the Colonel an O.B.E.  
Lieutenant Bird got the D.S.O.  
And Sam got... five days C.B.

Marriott Edgar

## Queen Matilda

Henry the first, surnamed " Beauclare,"  
Lost his only son William at sea,  
So when Henry died it were hard to decide  
Who his heir and successor should be.

There were two runners-up for the title-  
His daughter Matilda was one,  
And the other, a boy, known as Stephen of Blois,  
His young sister Adela's son.

Matilda by right should have had it,  
Being daughter of him as were dead,  
But the folks wasn't keen upon having a queen,  
So they went and crowned Stephen instead.

This 'ere were a knockout for Tilda,  
The notion she could not absorb  
To lose at one blow both the crown and the throne,  
To say naught of the sceptre and orb.

So she summoned her friends in t'West Country  
From Bristol, Bath, Gloucester and Frome,  
And also a lot of relations from Scotland,  
Who'd come South and wouldn't go home.

The East Counties rallied round Stephen,  
Where his cause had support of the masses,  
And his promise of loot brought a lot of recruits  
From the more intellectual classes.

The Country were split in two parties  
In a manner you'd hardly believe,  
The West with a will shouted: "Up with Matilda !"  
The East hollered: Come along, Steve!

The two armies met up in Yorkshire,  
Both leaders the same tactics tried.  
To each soldier they gave a big standard to wave,  
In hopes they'd impress t 'other side.

It were known as the battle o't Standard,  
Though no battling anyone saw,  
For with flags in their right hands, the lads couldn't fight,  
And the referee called it a draw.

The next time they met were at Lincoln,  
Where Stephen were properly beat,  
At the end of the scrap he were led off a captive,  
With iron balls chained to his feet.

They took him in triumph to Tilda,  
Who, assuming an arrogant mien,

Snatched the Crown off his head and indignantly said  
"Take your 'at off in front of your Queen!"

So Stephen were put in a dungeon,  
While Tilda ascended the throne  
And reigned undisturbed for best part of a year,  
Till she looked on the job as her own.

But Stephen weren't beat by a long chalk  
His plans for escape he soon made,  
For he found Tilda's troops were all getting fed up,  
Having heard that they wouldn't be paid.

So when Tilda got snowed up at Oxford,  
Where she'd taken to staying of late,  
She woke one fine morn, to the sound of a horn,  
And found Stephen outside her front gate.

Her troops gone, her castle surrounded,  
She saw she hadn't a chance,  
So, the ground being white, she escaped in her nightie  
And caught the next packet for France.

She didn't do badly at finish,  
When everything's weighed up and reckoned  
For when Stephen was gone the next heir to the throne  
Were Matilda's son, Henry the second.

Marriott Edgar

## Richard Coeur de Lion

Richard the First, Coeur-de-Lion,  
Is a name that we speak of with pride,  
Though he only lived six months in England  
From his birth to the day that he died.

He spent all his time fighting battles,  
Dressed up in most rigid attire,  
For he had his suits made by the Blacksmith,  
And his underwear knitted of wire.

He married a lady from Flanders,  
Berengaria's what they called her;  
She turned out a good wife to Richard,  
In spite of a name like that there.

For when he came home from his fighting  
She'd bandage the wounds in his sconce,  
And every time a snake bit him  
She'd suck out the poison at once.

In their 'ouse they'd a minstrel called Blondel  
To amuse them at t'end of the day'  
And the King had but one thing against him...  
He had nobbut one tune he could play.

The Queen saw nowt wrong with the number  
And would have it again and again,  
And when Richard said: "Put a sock in it!"  
She'd give 'im a look full of pain.

The King got fed up at the finish,  
And were so sick of 'earing it played,  
That he packed his spare suit on a wagon  
And went off and joined the Crusade.

He got fighting the moment he landed,  
And though Saracen lads did their best,  
He cut off their heads in such numbers,  
That the hatmakers lodged a protest.

The Sultan, whose name were Saladin,  
Thought he'd best try this business to stem,  
So he rode up to Richard and told him  
He mustn't do that there to them.

Said Richard: "Oh! Who's going to stop me?"  
Said Saladin: "I will-and quick!"  
So the King poked his sword at the Sultan,  
Who, in turn, swiped his skimpter at Dick.

They fought all that day without ceasing;  
They fought till at last they both saw

That each was a match for the other,  
So they chucked it and called it a draw.

As Richard rode home in the moonlight  
He heard someone trying to croon,  
And there by the roadside stood Blondel,  
Still playing his signature tune.

He'd worked out his passage from England  
In search of his Master and Lord,  
And had swum the last part of the journey  
'Cos his tune got 'im thrown overboard.

This meeting filled Richard with panic:  
He rode off and never drew rein  
Till he got past the Austrian border  
And felt he could breathe once again.

He hid in a neighbouring Castle,  
But he hadn't been there very long  
When one night just outside his window  
Stood Blondel, still singing his song.

This 'ere took the heart out of Richard;  
He went home dejected and low,  
And the very next fight he got into  
He were killed without striking a blow.

Marriott Edgar

## Sam Goes To It

Sam Small had retired from the Army,  
In the old Duke of Wellington's time,  
So when present unpleasantness started,  
He were what you might call... past his prime.

He'd lived for some years in retirement,  
And knew nowt of war, if you please,  
Till they blasted and bombed his allotment,  
And shelled the best part of his peas.

'T were as if bugles called Sam to duty,  
For his musket he started to search,  
He found it at last in the Hen house,  
Buff Orpingtons had it for perch.

Straight off to the Fusilliers' depot,  
He went to rejoin his old troop...  
Where he found as they couldn't recruit Him,  
Until his age group was called up.

Now Sam wasn't getting no younger,  
Past the three score and ten years was he,  
And he reckoned by time they reached his age group,  
He'd be very near ten score and three.

So he took up the matter with Churchill,  
Who said, "I don't know what to do,  
Never was there a time when so many,  
Came asking so much from so few."

"I don't want no favours" Sam answered,  
"Don't think as I'm one of that mob,  
All I'm asking is give me the tools, lad,  
And let me help finish the job."

"I'll fit you in somewhere," said Winnie,  
"Old soldiers we must not discard."  
Then seeing he'd got his own musket,  
He sent him to join the Home Guard.

They gave Sam a coat with no stripes on,  
In spite of the service he'd seen,  
Which considering he'd been a King's sergeant,  
Kind of rankled... you know what I mean.

He said "I come back to the Army,  
Expecting my country's thanks,  
And the first thing I find when I get here,  
Is that I've been reduced to the ranks.

He found all the lads sympathetic,  
They agreed that 'twere a disgrace,

Except one old chap in the corner,  
With a nutcracker kind of a face.

Said the old fella, "Who do you think you are?  
The last to appear on the scene,  
And you start off by wanting promotion,  
Last come, last served... see what I mean?"

Said Sam, "Wasn't I at Corunna,  
And when company commander got shot,  
Didn't I lead battalion to victory?"  
Said the old fella, "No... you did not."

"I didn't?" said Sam quite indignant,  
"Why, in every fight Wellington fought,  
Wasn't I at his right hand to guard him?"  
Said old chap, "You were nowt of the sort."

"What do you know of Duke and his battles?"  
Said Sam, with a withering look,  
Said the old man, "I ought to know something,  
Between you and me... I'm the Duke."

And if you should look in any evening,  
You'll find them both in the canteen,  
Ex Commander-in-Chief and ex Sergeant,  
Both just Home Guards... you know what I mean?

Marriott Edgar

## Sam's Christmas Pudding

It was Christmas Day in the trenches  
In Spain in Penninsular War,  
And Sam Small were cleaning his musket  
A thing as he'd ne're done before.

They'd had 'em inspected that morning  
And Sam had got into disgrace,  
For when sergeant had looked down the barrel  
A sparrow flew out in his face.

The sergeant reported the matter  
To Lieutenant Bird then and there.  
Said Lieutenant 'How very disgusting'  
The Duke must be told of this 'ere.'

The Duke were upset when he heard  
He said, 'I'm astonished, I am.  
I must make a most drastic example  
There'll be no Christmas pudding for Sam.'

When Sam were informed of his sentence  
Surprise, rooted him to the spot.  
'Twas much worse than he had expected,  
He though as he'd only be shot.

And so he sat cleaning his musket  
And polishing barrel and butt.  
While the pudding his mother had sent him,  
Lay there in the mud at his foot.

Now the centre that Sam's lot were holding  
Ran around a place called Badajoz.  
Where the Spaniards had put up a bastion  
And ooh...! what a bastion it was.

They pounded away all the morning  
With canister, grape shot and ball.  
But the face of the bastion defied them,  
They made no impression at all.

They started again after dinner  
Bombarding as hard as they could.  
And the Duke brought his own private cannon  
But that weren't a ha'pence o' good.

The Duke said, 'Sam, put down thy musket  
And help me lay this gun true.'  
Sam answered, 'You'd best ask your favours  
From them as you give pudding to.'

The Duke looked at Sam so reproachful  
'And don't take it that way,' said he.

'Us Generals have got to be ruthless  
It hurts me more than it did thee.'

Sam sniffed at these words kind of sceptic,  
Then looked down the Duke's private gun.  
And said 'We'd best put in two charges,  
We'll never bust bastion with one.'

He tipped cannon ball out of muzzle  
He took out the wadding and all.  
He filled barrel chock full of powder,  
Then picked up and replaced the ball.

He took a good aim at the bastion  
Then said 'Right-o, Duke, let her fly.'  
The cannon nigh jumped off her trunnions,  
And up went the bastion, sky high.

The Duke, he weren't 'alf elated  
He danced around trench full of glee.  
And said, 'Sam, for this gallant action.  
You can hot up your pudding for tea.'

Sam looked 'round to pick up his pudding  
But it wasn't there, nowhere about.  
In the place where he thought he had left it,  
Lay the cannon ball he'd just tipped out.

Sam saw in a flash what 'ad happened:  
By an unprecedented mishap.  
The pudding his mother had sent him,  
Had blown Badajoz off map.

That's why fuisilliers wear to this moment  
A badge which they think's a grenade.  
But they're wrong... it's a brass reproduction,  
Of the pudding Sam's mother once made.

Marriott Edgar

## Sam's Racehorse

When Sam Small retired from the Army  
He'd a pension of ninepence a day,  
And seven pounds fourteen and twopence  
He'd saved from his rations and pay.

He knew this 'ere wasn't a fortune,  
But reckoned with prudence and care  
He'd find some investment to save him  
From hard work and things like that there.

He thought he'd invest in a race orse,  
As apart from excitement and fun  
He'd be able to sit down in comfort  
And live on the money he won.

He knew buying 'orses was tricky,  
But that didn't daunt him at all;  
He said "They must rise early 't mornin  
As wants to play tricks on Sam Small!"

When he called on the local 'Orse-dealer  
Surprise rooted him to the spot,  
For he found 'twere his old Comp'ny Sergeant,  
Whose kindness he'd never forgot.

'Twere a happy reunion on both sides,  
Their pleasure at meeting was great,  
For each hoped to diddle the other  
And wipe a few grudges off slate.

The Sergeant brought out his race 'orses,  
For which he asked various sums;  
They hadn't a tooth left between them,  
But Sam knew their age by their gums.

Sam studied their lines and deportment  
As Sergeant were trotting them round,  
And told him he reckoned their value  
Were fourpence, per race 'orse, per pound.

Now the Sarg. had a filly called Buster  
As he hadn't said nothing about,  
But when Sam turned his nose up at t'others  
He thought as he'd best trot her out.

Sam were struck with her youthful appearance,  
Though there wasn't much light in the place,  
For her teeth were all pearly and even  
And there wasn't a line on her face.

The Sergeant asked Sam twenty guineas,  
But Sam, who were up to his tricks,

Pretended he thought he'd said shillings  
And offered him eighteen and six.

In the end he paid eight guineas for her,  
And when he'd got home with the goods  
He reckoned he'd not done so badly,  
For three of the guineas was duds.

But later, when he thought it over,  
A doubt through his mind seemed to creep,  
If Buster were all she were painted,  
Why the Sergeant had sold her so cheap.

He very soon found out the answer  
When he looked at her close in her stall,  
She'd the marks where her face had been lifted  
And a mouth full of false teeth an' all.

The little walk home had fatigued her  
And the cold air had started her cough;  
Sam reckoned he'd best see the Sergeant  
And tell him the bargain was off.

The place were locked up when he got there,  
And he realized Sergeant had bunked,  
So back he went home in a dudgeon  
And found Buster lying-defunct.

Sam knew if he wanted to sell her  
He mustn't let on she were dead,  
So he raffled her down at the Darts Club-  
Forty members at five bob a head.

The raffle were highly successful,  
They all came in every man jack  
And so's winner'd have no cause to grumble  
Sam gave him his five shillings back.

Marriott Edgar

## The Battle of Hastings

I'll tell of the Battle of Hastings,  
As happened in days long gone by,  
When Duke William became King of England,  
And 'Arold got shot in the eye.

It were this way - one day in October  
The Duke, who were always a toff  
Having no battles on at the moment,  
Had given his lads a day off.

They'd all taken boats to go fishing,  
When some chap in t' Conqueror's ear  
Said 'Let's go and put breeze up the Saxons;'  
Said Bill - 'By gum, that's an idea.'

Then turning around to his soldiers,  
He lifted his big Nonnan voice,  
Shouting - 'Hands up who's coming to England.'  
That was swank 'cos they hadn't no choice.

They started away about tea-time -  
The sea was so calm and so still,  
And at quarter to ten the next morning  
They arrived at a place called Bexhill.

King 'Arold came up as they landed -  
His face full of venom and 'ate -  
He said 'If you've come for Regatta  
You've got here just six weeks too late.'

At this William rose, cool but 'aughty,  
And said 'Give us none of your cheek;  
You'd best have your throne re-upholstered,  
I'll be wanting to use it next week.'

When 'Arold heard this 'ere defiance,  
With rage he turned purple and blue,  
And shouted some rude words in Saxon,  
To which William answered - 'And you.'

'Twere a beautiful day for a battle;  
The Normans set off with a will,  
And when both sides was duly assembled,  
They tossed for the top of the hill.

King 'Arold he won the advantage,  
On the hill-top he took up his stand,  
With his knaves and his cads all around him,  
On his 'orse with his 'awk in his 'and.

The Normans had nowt in their favour,  
Their chance of a victory seemed small,

For the slope of the field were against them,  
And the wind in their faces an' all.

The kick-off were sharp at two-thirty,  
And soon as the whistle had went  
Both sides started banging each other  
'Til the swineherds could hear them in Kent.

The Saxons had best line of forwards,  
Well armed both with buckler and sword -  
But the Normans had best combination,  
And when half-time came neither had scored.

So the Duke called his cohorts together  
And said - 'Let's pretend that we're beat,  
Once we get Saxons down on the level  
We'll cut off their means of retreat.'

So they ran - and the Saxons ran after,  
Just exactly as William had planned,  
Leaving 'Arold alone on the hill-top  
On his 'orse with his 'awk in his 'and.

When the Conqueror saw what had happened,  
A bow and an arrow he drew;  
He went right up to 'Arold and shot him.  
He were off-side, but what could they do?

The Normans turned round in a fury,  
And gave back both parry and thrust,  
Till the fight were all over bar shouting,  
And you couldn't see Saxons for dust.

And after the battle were over  
They found 'Arold so stately and grand,  
Sitting there with an eye-full of arrow  
On his 'orse with his 'awk in his 'and.

Marriott Edgar

## The Burghers of Calais

It were after the Battle of Crecy-  
The foe all lay dead on the ground-  
And King Edward went out with his soldiers  
To clean up the places around.

The first place they came to were Calais,  
Where t' burghers all stood in a row,  
And when Edward told them to surrender  
They told Edward where he could go.

Said he, " I'll beleaguer this city,  
I'll teach them to flout their new King -  
Then he told all his lads to get camp-stools  
And sit round the place in a ring.

Now the burghers knew nowt about Crecy-  
They laughed when they saw Edward's plan-  
And thinking their side were still winning,  
They shrugged and said- " San fairy Ann."

But they found at the end of a fortnight  
That things wasn't looking so nice,  
With nowt going out but the pigeons,  
And nowt coming in but the mice.

For the soldiers sat round on their camp-stools,  
And never a foot did they stir,  
But passed their time doing their knitting,  
And crosswords, and things like that there.

The burghers began to get desperate  
Wi' t' food supply sinking so low,  
For they'd nowt left but dry bread and water,  
Or what they called in French "pang" and "oh"

They stuck it all autumn and winter,  
But when at last spring came around  
They was bothered, bewitched and beleaguered,  
And cods' heads was tenpence a pound.

So they hung a white flag on the ramparts  
To show they was sick of this 'ere-  
And the soldiers, who'd finished their knitting,  
All stood up and gave them a cheer.

When King Edward heard they had surrendered  
He said to them, in their own tongue,  
"You've kept me here all football season,  
And twelve of you's got to be hung."

Then up stood the Lord Mayor of Calais,  
"I'll make one" he gallantly cried-

Then he called to his friends on the Council  
To make up the rest of the side.

When the townspeople heard of the hanging  
They rushed in a crowd through the gate-  
They was all weeping tears of compassion,  
And hoping they wasn't too late.

With ropes round their necks the twelve heroes  
Stood proudly awaiting their doom,  
Till the hangman at last crooked his finger  
And coaxingly said to them-" Come.

At that moment good Queen Phillippa  
Ran out of her bower and said-  
Oh, do have some mercy, my husband;  
Oh don't be so spiteful, dear Ted."

Then down on her knee-joints before them  
She flopped, and in accents that rang,  
Said, "Please, Edward, just to oblige me,  
You can't let these poor burghers hang.

The King was so touched with her pleading,  
He lifted his wife by the hand  
And he gave her all twelve as a keepsake  
And peace once again reigned in the land.

Marriott Edgar

## The Channel Swimmer

Would you hear a Wild tale of adventure  
Of a hero who tackled the sea,  
A super-man swimming the ocean,  
Then hark to the tale of Joe Lee.

Our Channel, our own Straits of Dover  
Had been swum by an alien lot:  
Our British-born swimmers had tried it,  
But that was as far as they'd got.

So great was the outcry in England,  
Darts Players neglected their beer,  
And the Chanc'Ior proclaimed from the Woolsack  
As Joe Lee were the chap for this 'ere.

For in swimming baths all round the country  
Joe were noted for daring and strength;  
Quite often he'd dived in the deep end,  
And thought nothing of swimming a length.

So they wrote him, C/o Workhouse Master,  
Joe were spending the summer with him,  
And promised him two Christmas puddings  
If over the Channel he'd swim.

Joe jumped into t' breach like an 'ero,  
He said, "All their fears I'll relieve,  
And it isn't their puddings I'm after,  
As I told them last Christmas Eve.

"Though many have tackled the Channel  
From Grisnez to Dover that is,  
For the honour and glory of England  
I'll swim from Dover to Gris-niz."

As soon as his words were made public  
The newspapers gathered around  
And offered to give him a pension  
If he lost both his legs and got drowned.

He borrowed a tug from the Navy  
To swim in the shelter alee,  
The Wireless folk lent him a wavelength,  
And the Water Board lent him the sea.

His wife strapped a mascot around him,  
The tears to his eyes gently stole;  
'Twere some guinness corks she had collected  
And stitched to an old camisole.

He entered the water at daybreak,  
A man with a camera stood near,

He said "Hurry up and get in, lad,  
You're spoiling my view of the pier."

At last he were in, he were swimming  
With a beautiful overarm stroke,  
When the men on the tug saw with horror  
That the rope he were tied to had broke.

Then down came a fog, thick as treacle,  
The tug looked so distant and dim  
A voice shouted "Help, I am drowning,"  
Joe listened and found it were him.

The tug circled round till they found him,  
They hauled him aboard like a sack,  
Tied a new tow-rope around him,  
Smacked him and then threw him back.

'Twere at sunset, or just a bit later,  
That he realized all wasn't right,  
For the tow-rope were trailing behind him  
And the noose round his waist getting tight.

One hasty glance over his shoulder,  
He saw in a flash what were wrong.  
The Captain had shut off his engine,  
Joe were towing the Tugboat along.

On and on through the darkness he paddled  
Till he knew he were very near in  
By the way he kept bumping the bottom  
And hitting the stones with his chin.

Was it Grimsby he'd reached?... No, it wasn't,  
The treacherous tide in its track  
Had carried him half-way to Blackpool  
And he had to walk all the way back.

Marriott Edgar

## The Jubilee Sov'reign

On Jubilee Day the Ramsbottoms  
Invited relations to tea,  
Including young Albert's grandmother-  
An awkward old . . party, was she.

She'd seen Queen Victoria's accession  
And `er wedding to Albert (the Good)  
But she got quite upset when young Albert  
Asked `er `ow she'd got on in the Flood.

She cast quite a damper on't party,  
But she warmed up a bit after tea,  
And gave Albert a real golden sovereign  
She'd been saving since last Jubilee.

It `ad picture of Queen on't one side  
And a dragon fight on the reverse,  
And it smelled of camphor and cobwebs  
Through being so long in `er purse.

Albert `andled the coin, and `e kissed it  
And `e felt the rough edge with `is tongue;  
For `e knew by the look of `is father  
That it wouldn't be `is very long.

"I`ll show you a trick wi' that sovereign,"  
Said Pa, `oo were `overin' near-  
And `e took and pretended to eat it,  
Then brought it back out of `is ear.

This magic filled Albert with wonder,  
And before you could say "Uncle Dick",  
`E'd got the coin back from `is father  
And performed the first part of the trick.

When they all saw where the money `ad gone  
With excitement the relatives burned;  
And each one suggested some process  
For getting the money returned.

Some were for fishing with tweezers,  
While some were for shaking it out;  
"If we only got back a few shillings,"  
They said "'twould be better than nowt."

They tried `olding Albert `ead downward  
And giving `is shoulders a clump-  
`Till his uncle, `oo worked for a chemist  
Said "There's nowt for it but stomach pump."

Well, they `adn't a stomach pump `andy,  
But Pa did the best that `e could

With a bicycle pump that they borrowed  
But that weren't nearly so good.

So off they went to the doctor  
`Oo looked down `is throat with a glass;  
`E said "This'll mean operation-  
I fear that `e'll `ave to `ave gas."

"`Ow much is this `ere goin' to cost me?"  
Said Father, beginning to squirm.  
"I'm afraid that it comes out expensive-  
The best gas is eight pence a therm.

There's my time, six shillings an hour;  
You can't do these things in two ticks-  
By rights I should charge you a guinea,  
But I'll do it for eighteen and six."

"Wot, eighteen and six to get sovereign?"  
Said Father, "That doesn't sound sense  
I'll tell you, you'd best keep young Albert  
And give us the odd eighteen pence!"

The doctor concurred this arrangement,  
But to this day he stands in some doubt  
As to whether he's in eighteen shillings  
Or whether he's eighteen pence out.

Marriott Edgar

## The Lion and Albert

There's a famous seaside place called Blackpool,  
That's noted for fresh air and fun,  
And Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom  
Went there with young Albert, their son.

A grand little lad was young Albert,  
All dressed in his best; quite a swell  
With a stick with an 'orse's 'ead 'andle,  
The finest that Woolworth's could sell.

They didn't think much of the Ocean:  
The waves, they were fiddlin' and small,  
There was no wrecks and nobody drowned,  
Fact, nothing to laugh at at all.

So, seeking for further amusement,  
They paid and went into the Zoo,  
Where they'd Lions and Tigers and Camels,  
And old ale and sandwiches too.

There were one great big Lion called Wallace;  
His nose were all covered with scars -  
He lay in a somnolent posture,  
With the side of his face on the bars.

Now Albert had heard about Lions,  
How they was ferocious and wild -  
To see Wallace lying so peaceful,  
Well, it didn't seem right to the child.

So straightway the brave little feller,  
Not showing a morsel of fear,  
Took his stick with its 'orse's 'ead 'andle  
And pushed it in Wallace's ear.

You could see that the Lion didn't like it,  
For giving a kind of a roll,  
He pulled Albert inside the cage with 'im,  
And swallowed the little lad 'ole.

Then Pa, who had seen the occurrence,  
And didn't know what to do next,  
Said 'Mother! Yon Lion's 'et Albert',  
And Mother said 'Well, I am vexed!'

Then Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom -  
Quite rightly, when all's said and done -  
Complained to the Animal Keeper,  
That the Lion had eaten their son.

The keeper was quite nice about it;  
He said 'What a nasty mishap.

Are you sure that it's your boy he's eaten?  
Pa said "Am I sure? There's his cap!"

The manager had to be sent for.  
He came and he said 'What's to do?'  
Pa said 'Yon Lion's 'et Albert,  
'And 'im in his Sunday clothes, too.'

Then Mother said, 'Right's right, young feller;  
I think it's a shame and a sin,  
For a lion to go and eat Albert,  
And after we've paid to come in.'

The manager wanted no trouble,  
He took out his purse right away,  
Saying 'How much to settle the matter?'  
And Pa said "What do you usually pay?"

But Mother had turned a bit awkward  
When she thought where her Albert had gone.  
She said 'No! someone's got to be summonsed' -  
So that was decided upon.

Then off they went to the P'lice Station,  
In front of the Magistrate chap;  
They told 'im what happened to Albert,  
And proved it by showing his cap.

The Magistrate gave his opinion  
That no one was really to blame  
And he said that he hoped the Ramsbottoms  
Would have further sons to their name.

At that Mother got proper blazing,  
'And thank you, sir, kindly,' said she.  
'What waste all our lives raising children  
To feed ruddy Lions? Not me!'

Marriott Edgar

## The 'Ole in the Ark

One evening at dusk as Noah stood on his Ark,  
Putting green oil in starboard side lamp,  
His wife came along and said, 'Noah, summat's wrong,  
Our cabin is getting quite damp.

Noah said, 'Is that so?' Then he went down below,  
And found it were right what she'd said,  
For there on the floor quite a puddle he saw,  
It was slopping around under t' bed.

Said he, 'There's an 'ole in the bottom somewhere,  
We must find it before we retire.'  
Then he thowt for a bit, and he said 'Aye, that's it,  
A bloodhound is what we require.'

Se he went and fetched bloodhound from place where it lay,  
'Tween the skunk and the polecat it were,  
And as things there below, were a trifle so-so,  
It were glad of a breath of fresh air.

They followed the sound as it went sniffing round,  
'Til at last they located the leak,  
'Twere a small hole in the side, about two inches wide,  
Where a swordfish had poked in its beak.

And by gum! how the wet squirted in through that hole,  
Well, young Shem who at sums was expert,  
Worked it out on his slate that it came at the rate,  
Of per gallon, per second, per squirt.

The bloodhound tried hard to keep water in check,  
By lapping it up with his tongue,  
But it came in so fast through that hole, that at last,  
He shoved in his nose for a bung.

The poor faithful hound, he were very near drowned,  
They dragged him away none too soon,  
For the stream as it rose, pushed its way up his nose,  
And blew him up like a balloon.

And then Mrs Noah shoved her elbow in t'hole,  
And said, 'Eh! it's stopped I believe,'  
But they found very soon as she'd altered her tune,  
For the water had got up her sleeve.

When she saw as her elbow weren't doing much good,  
She said to Noah, 'I've an idea,  
You sit on the leak and by t'end of the week,  
There's no knowing, the weather may clear.'

Noah didn't think much to this notion, at all,  
But reckoned he'd give it a try,

On the 'ole down he flopped, and the leaking all stopped,  
And all... except him, was quite dry.

They took him his breakfast and dinner and tea,  
As day after day there he sat,  
'Til the rain was all passed and they landed at last,  
On top side of Mount Ararat.

And that is how Noah got them all safe ashore,  
But ever since then, strange to tell,  
Them as helped save the Ark has all carried a mark,  
Aye, and all their descendants as well.

That's why dog has a cold nose, and ladies cold elbows,  
You'll also find if you enquire,  
That's why a man takes his coat tails in hand,  
And stands with his back to the fire.

Marriott Edgar

## The Recumbent Posture

The day after Christmas, young Albert  
Were what's called, confined to his bed,  
With a tight kind of pain in his stummick  
And a light feeling up in his head.

His parents were all in a fluster  
When they saw little lad were so sick,  
They said, 'Put out your tongue!', When they'd seen it  
They said, 'Put it back again - quick!'

Ma made him a basin of gruel,  
But that were a move for the worse;  
Though the little lad tried hard to eat it,  
At the finish he did the reverse.

The pain showed no signs of abating,  
So at last they got Doctor to call.  
He said it were in the ab-domain  
And not in the stummick at all.

He sent up a bottle of physick,  
With instructions on t' label to say,  
'To be taken in a recumbent posture,  
One teaspoon, three times a day.'

As Ma stood there reading the label  
Pa started to fidget about.  
He said 'Get a teaspoon and dose him,  
Before he gets better without.'

'I can manage the teaspoon' said Mother  
A look of distress on her face.  
'It's this 'ere recumbent posture...  
I haven't got one in the place.'

Said Pa, 'What about Mrs Lupton?..  
Next door 'ere - you'd better ask her;  
A woman who's buried three husbands  
Is sure to have one of them there.'

So they went round and asked Mrs Lupton,  
'Aye, I know what you mean,' she replied,  
'I 'ad one on order for 'Orace,  
But poor dear got impatient and died.'

She said, 'You'd best try the Co-Op shop,  
They'll have one in stock I dare say;  
' Fact I think I saw one in the winder  
Last time I was passing that way.'

So round they went to the Co-Op shop,  
And at the counter for household supplies;

Pa asked for a recumbent posture  
And the shopman said 'Yes sir... what size?'

Said Ma, 'It's for our little Albert,  
I don't know what size he would use,  
I know he takes thirteen in collars,  
And sixes, four fittings, in shoes.'

'If it's little lads size as you're wanting,'  
Said the shopman, 'I'm sorry to say,  
We nobbut had one in the building,  
And that one were sold yesterday.'

He sent them across to a tin-smith,  
Who said, 'I know what you've in mind;  
If you'll draw me a pattern, I'll make one.'  
But Pa'd left his pencil behind.

They tried every shop they could think of,  
They walked for two hours by the clock,  
And though most places reckoned to keep them,  
They'd none of them got one in stock.

The last place they tried was the chemist,  
He looked at them both with a frown.  
And told them a recumbent posture  
Were Latin, and meant lying down.

It means 'Lying down' - put in Latin  
Said Father, 'That's just what I thowt.'  
Then he picked up a side-glance from Mother,  
And pretended he hadn't said nowt.

'They're not dosing my lad with Latin.'  
Said Mother, her face looking grim,  
'Just plain Castor Oil's all he's getting  
And I'm leaving the posture to him.'

Marriott Edgar

## The Return of Albert

You've 'eard 'ow young Albert Ramsbottom,  
In the Zoo up at Blackpool one year,  
With a stick and 'orse's 'ead 'andle,  
Gave a lion a poke in the ear.

The name of the lion was Wallace,  
The poke in the ear made 'im wild;  
And before you could say 'Bob's your Uncle,'  
'E'd up and 'e'd swallered the child.

'E were sorry the moment 'e'd done it,  
With children 'e'd always been chums,  
And besides, 'e'd no teeth in 'is noodle,  
And 'e couldn't chew Albert on t'gums.

'E could feel the lad moving inside 'im,  
As 'e lay on 'is bed of dried ferns,  
And it might 'ave been little lad's birthday,  
'E wished 'im such 'appy returns.

But Albert kept kicking and fighting,  
Till Wallace arose feeling bad,  
And felt it were time that 'e started to stage  
A come-back for the lad.

So with 'is 'ead down in a corner,  
On 'is front paws 'e started to walk,  
And 'e coughed and 'e sneezed and 'e gargled,  
Till Albert shot out like a cork.

Old Wallace felt better direc'ly,  
And 'is figure once more became lean,  
But the only difference with Albert  
Was 'is face and 'is 'ands were quite clean.

Meanwhile Mister and Missus Ramsbottom  
'Ad gone 'ome to tea feeling blue;  
Ma says 'I feel down in the mouth like,'  
Pa says "Aye! I bet Albert does too.'

Said Ma 'It just goes for to show yer  
That the future is never revealed,  
If I thought we was going to lose 'im  
I'd 'ave not 'ad 'is boots soled and 'eeled.

'Let's look on the bright side,' said Father  
'What can't be 'elped must be endured,  
Every cloud 'as a silvery lining,  
And we did 'ave young Albert insured.'

A knock at the door came that moment,  
As Father these kind words did speak,

'Twas the man from t'Prudential,  
E'd called for their 'tuppence per person per week.'

When Father saw who 'ad been knocking,  
'E laughed and 'e kept laughing so,  
That the young man said 'What's there to laugh at?'  
Pa said 'You'll laugh an' all when you know.'

'Excuse 'im for laughing,' said Mother,  
'But really things 'appen so strange,  
Our Albert's been ate by a lion,  
You've got to pay us for a change.'

Said the young feller from the Prudential,  
'Now, come come, let's understand this,  
You don't mean to say that you've lost 'im?'  
Ma says 'Oh, no! we <I>know</I> where 'e is.'

When the young man 'ad 'eard all the details,  
A bag from 'is pocket he drew,  
And he paid them with interest and bonus,  
The sum of nine pounds four and two.

Pa 'ad scarce got 'is 'and on the money,  
When a face at the window they see,  
And Mother says 'Eeh! look, it's Albert,'  
And Father says 'Aye, it would be.'

Young Albert came in all excited,  
and started 'is story to give,  
And Pa says 'I'll never trust lions again,  
Not as long as I live.'

The young feller from the Prudential  
To pick up his money began,  
And Father says 'Eeh! just a moment,  
Don't be in a hurry, young man.'

Then giving young Albert a shilling,  
He said 'Pop off back to the Zoo.  
'Ere's your stick with the 'orse's 'ead 'andle,  
Go and see what the Tigers can do!'

Marriott Edgar

## The Runcorn Ferry

On the banks of the Mersey, o'er on Cheshire side,  
Lies Runcorn that's best known to fame  
By Transporter Bridge as takes folks over t'stream,  
Or else brings them back across same.

In days afore Transporter Bridge were put up,  
A ferryboat lay in the slip,  
And old Ted the boatman would row folks across  
At per tuppence per person per trip.

Now Runcorn lay over on one side of stream,  
And Widnes on t'other side stood,  
And, as nobody wanted to go either place,  
Well, the trade wasn't any too good.

One evening, to Ted's superlative surprise,  
Three customers came into view:  
A Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom it were,  
And Albert, their little son, too.

"How much for the three?" Mr Ramsbottom asked,  
As his hand to his pocket did dip.  
Ted said: "Same for three as it would be for one,  
Per tuppence per person per trip."

"You're not charging tuppence for that little lad?"  
Said Mother, her eyes flashing wild.  
"Per tuppence per person per trip", answered Ted,  
"Per woman, per man, or per child".

"Fivepence for three, that's the most that I'll pay",  
Said Father, "Don't waste time in talk".  
"Per tuppence per person per trip", answered Ted,  
"And them, as can't pay, 'as to walk!"

"We can walk, an' all", said Father. "Come Mother,  
It's none so deep, weather's quite mild".  
So into the water the three of them stepped:  
The father, the mother, the child.

The further they paddled, the deeper it got,  
But they wouldn't give in, once begun.  
In the spirit that's made Lancashire what she is,  
They'd sooner be drowned than done.

Very soon, the old people were up to their necks,  
And the little lad clean out of sight.  
Said Father: "Where's Albert?" And Mother replied:  
"I've got hold of his hand, he's all right!"

Well, just at that moment, Pa got an idea  
And, floundering back to old Ted, He said:

"We've walked half-way. Come, tak' us the rest  
For half-price -- that's a penny a head."

But Ted wasn't standing for none of that there,  
And, making an obstinate lip,  
"Per tuppence per person per trip", Ted replied,  
"Per trip, or per part of per trip".

"All right, then", said Father, "let me tak' the boat,  
And I'll pick up the others half-way.  
I'll row them across, and I'll bring the boat back,  
And thruppence in t'bargain I'll pay".

T'were money for nothing. Ted answered: "Right-ho",  
And Father got hold of the sculls.  
With the sharp end of boat towards middle of stream,  
He were there in a couple of pulls.

He got Mother out -- it were rather a job,  
With the water, she weighed half a ton --  
Then, pushing the oar down the side of the boat,  
Started fishing around for his son.

When poor little Albert came up to the top,  
His collars were soggy and limp.  
And, with holding his breath at the bottom so long,  
His face were as red as a shrimp.

Pa took them across, and he brought the boat back,  
And he said to old Ted on the slip:  
"Wilt' row me across by me'sen?" Ted said:  
"Aye, at per tuppence per person per trip".

When they got t'other side, Father laughed fit to bust.  
He'd got best of bargain, you see.  
He'd worked it all out, and he'd got his own way,  
And he'd paid nobbut fivepence for three!

Marriott Edgar

### Three Ha'Pence a Foot

I'll tell you an old-fashioned story  
That Grandfather used to relate,  
Of a joiner and building contractor;  
'Is name, it were Sam Oglethwaite.

In a shop on the banks of the Irwell,  
Old Sam used to follow 'is trade,  
In a place you'll have 'eard of, called Bury;  
You know, where black puddings is made.

One day, Sam were filling a knot 'ole  
Wi' putty, when in thro' the door  
Came an old feller fair wreathed wi' whiskers;  
T'ould chap said 'Good morning, I'm Noah.'

Sam asked Noah what was 'is business,  
And t'ould chap went on to remark,  
That not liking the look of the weather,  
'E were thinking of building an Ark.

'E'd gotten the wood for the bulwarks,  
And all t'other shipbuilding junk,  
And wanted some nice Bird's Eye Maple  
To panel the side of 'is bunk.

Now Maple were Sam's Monopoly;  
That means it were all 'is to cut,  
And nobody else 'adn't got none;  
So 'e asked Noah three ha'pence a foot.

'A ha'penny too much,' replied Noah  
'A Penny a foot's more the mark;  
A penny a foot, and when t'rain comes,  
I'll give you a ride in me Ark.'  
But neither would budge in the bargain;  
The whole daft thing were kind of a jam,  
So Sam put 'is tongue out at Noah,  
And Noah made 'Long Bacon ' at Sam

In wrath and ill-feeling they parted,  
Not knowing when they'd meet again,  
And Sam had forgot all about it,  
'Til one day it started to rain.

It rained and it rained for a fortni't,  
And flooded the 'ole countryside.  
It rained and it kept' on raining,  
'Til the Irwell were fifty mile wide.

The 'ouses were soon under water,  
And folks to the roof 'ad to climb.  
They said 'twas the rottenest summer

That Bury 'ad 'ad for some time.

The rain showed no sign of abating,  
And water rose hour by hour,  
'Til the only dry land were at Blackpool,  
And that were on top of the Tower.

So Sam started swimming to Blackpool;  
It took 'im best part of a week.  
'Is clothes were wet through when 'e got there,  
And 'is boots were beginning to leak.

'E stood to 'is watch-chain in water,  
On Tower top, just before dark,  
When who should come sailing towards 'im  
But old Noah, steering 'is Ark.

They stared at each other in silence,  
'Til Ark were alongside, all but,  
Then Noah said: 'What price yer Maple?'  
Sam answered 'Three ha'pence a foot.'

Noah said 'Nay; I'll make thee an offer,  
The same as I did t'other day.  
A penny a foot and a free ride.  
Now, come on, lad, what does tha say?'

'Three ha'pence a foot,' came the answer.  
So Noah 'is sail 'ad to hoist,  
And sailed off again in a dudgeon,  
While Sam stood determined, but moist.

Noah cruised around, flying 'is pigeons,  
'Til fortieth day of the wet,  
And on 'is way back, passing Blackpool,  
'E saw old Sam standing there yet.

'Is chin just stuck out of the water;  
A comical figure 'e cut,  
Noah said: 'Now what's the price of yer Maple?'  
Sam answered: 'Three ha'pence a foot.'

Said Noah: 'Ye'd best take my offer;  
It's last time I'll be hereabout;  
And if water comes half an inch higher,  
I'll happen get Maple for nowt.'

'Three ha'pence a foot it'll cost yer,  
And as fer me,' Sam said, 'don't fret.  
The sky's took a turn since this morning;  
I think it'll brighten up yet.'

Marriott Edgar

## Up'ards

'Twere getting dusk, one winter's night,  
When up the clough there came in sight,  
A lad who carried through the snow,  
A banner with this 'ere motto...  
'Uppards'

His face was glum as he did pass,  
His eyes were shiny... just like glass,  
And as he went upon his way,  
He nobbut this 'ere word did say...  
'Uppards'

And people sitting down to tea,  
They heard him plan, as plain can be,  
They thowt 'twere final football score,  
As this 'ere word rang out once more...  
'Uppards'

A policeman on his lonely beat,  
He stopped the lad up t' end of t' street,  
He said, "Where't going wi' that theer?"  
The lad just whispered in his ear...  
'Uppards'

"Don't go down t' clough." the policeman said,  
"It's mucky road for thee to tread,  
Canal's at bottom... deep and wide."  
"That's not my road." the lad replied,  
It's... 'Uppards'

A young lass stopped him further up,  
She said "Come in wi' me, and sup."  
He said, "I'm takin none o' yon,  
Besides... I must be getting on...  
'Uppards'"

Next day some lads had just begun,  
To tak' their whippets for a run,  
When dogs got scratching in the snow,  
And found flag with this 'ere motto...  
'Uppards'

That set them digging all around,  
And 'twasn't long before they found,  
A lad whose name they never learned,  
Whose face was white, whose toes had turned...  
'Uppards'

'Twas very plain for to behold,  
The lad had ta'en his death o' cold,  
He'd got his feet wet early on,  
And from his feet the cold had gone...

'Uppards'

This story only goes to show,  
That when the fields is white wi' snow,  
It's inadvisable to go...  
'Uppards'

EXCELSIOR

by  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1841)

The shades of night were falling fast,  
As through an Alpine village passed  
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,  
A banner with the strange device  
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath,  
Flashed like a faulchion from its sheath,  
And like a silver clarion rung  
The accents of that unknown tongue,  
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light  
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;  
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;  
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,  
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"  
And loud that clarion voice replied,  
Excelsior!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest  
Thy weary head upon this breast!"  
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
Excelsior!

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!  
Beware the awful avalanche!"  
This was the peasant's last Good-night,  
A voice replied, far up the height,

Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward  
The pious monks of Saint Bernard  
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,  
A voice cried through the startled air  
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,  
Half-buried in the snow was found,  
Still grasping in his hand of ice  
That banner with the strange device  
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,  
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,  
And from the sky, serene and far,  
A voice fell, like a falling star,  
Excelsior!

Marriott Edgar

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Marriott Edgar

## William Rufus

The reign of King William the Second  
Were an uninteresting affair  
There's only two things that's remembered of him  
That's his sudden death and his red hair.

He got his red hair from his Mother,  
The crown that he wore were his Dad's,  
And the arrow that came at the end of his reign  
Were a well-deserved gift from the lads.

For William were cunning and cruel,  
Addicted to every vice  
He'd bluster and perjure and ravage and murder,  
Apart from all that... he weren t nice.

He'd two brothers called Robert and Henry,  
One older, one younger than he,  
And by terms of the Will of old Conqueror Bill  
The estate had been split into three.

Thus William became King of England;  
And Normandy... that went to Bob;  
Young Hal got no throne, but received a cash bonus  
Instead of a regular job.

But Bob weren't content with his Dukedom,  
And Will weren't content with his throne  
Both wanted the lot and each started to plot  
How to add t'other share to his own.

Young Hal went from one to the other,  
Telling each as be thought he were right,  
And mixing the pudding he roused the bad blood in  
Them both till they reckoned they'd fight.

So Will got his army together  
And planned an invasion of France,  
But HaI chanced to find out what Will had in mind  
And sent Robert a line in advance.

The result were when Bill crossed the Channel,  
Instead of t'surprise that were meant,  
He was met on the shore by Duke Bob and his Normans.  
And came back as fast as he went.

And later when Bob crossed to England,  
Intending to ravage and sack,  
It were Henry again who upset the campaign  
And t'were Robert this time that went back

After one or two sim'lar debacles  
They tumbled to Henry's tricks,

And joined with each other to find their young brother  
And take him and knock him for six.

But Henry got wind of their coming,  
And made off without more ado  
To his fortified pitch on the Isle of St. Michel,  
From which he cocked snooks at the two.

When they found things had come to a deadlock  
They shook hands and called it a day,  
But though Henry pretended that quarrels was ended  
He still had a card he could play.

He came back to England with William  
And started a whispering campaign  
To spoil his prestige with his vassals and lieges  
Which whispering wasn't in vain.

For one day when William were hunting  
An arrow from somewhere took wing,  
And William were shot, falling dead on the spot,  
And Henry proclaimed himself King.

So young Henry, who started with nothing,  
At the finish held England in thrall,  
And as Bob were away with a party Crusading,  
He pinched his possessions and all.

Marriott Edgar