



Members' Newsletter

Number 118
Summer 2021

"Keepin Ahad O Wor Tung"

Northumbrian Language Society

Annual Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture

We are pleased to announce that we are making plans for a live lecture to be held in Morpeth on **Saturday 9th October**, hopefully in the Town Hall in the afternoon.

It all depends on the national and local situation of the Covid virus, which we hope will be under control by then.

**The lecture will be given by
NLS member and well-known
dialect performer Bob Bolam**

Further details of the date, time and venue will be published as soon as possible.

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Frae Wor Ain Corrispondint

"Yesterday, when I was out for a walk, I was on a narrow footpath and an elderly lady was coming the opposite way; we both stepped off the path to give the other space. As we passed, the lady said: 'This is a canny carry-on, isn't it?'. I'm used to the word 'canny' having many meanings, such as 'attractive', 'shrewd', etc, but I'd never come across it meaning 'ridiculous', which is clearly what she had in mind. Have I been missing a subtle nuance all these years? **Wor Editor sez** : "Whey, Aah divvent knaa whaat a "subtle nuance" is, but "canny" is yan o wor words that can hev ony meenin yuh wants, dissent it?"

Hoo mony meenins dis ony on yuh knaa fer "canny"? Haway hinnies, an let wuh knaa!

NLS News

The AGM was held on-line via Zoom on Friday the 7th of May, and chaired by our President, Katrina Porteous.

The Executive report for the previous twelve months was presented by the Chairman, Stuart Lawson, and after discussion, it was approved by the meeting. The report is printed on other pages of this Newsletter.

The annual accounts were presented by the Treasurer, John Davidson, and after discussion, they were approved by the meeting.

The current officers of the Society were re-elected, with one exception. Our Secretary, Avril Common, is no longer able to carry on in this role, and so, there is a vacancy for this position. Andy Bogle volunteered for the vacant position of Press and Publicity Officer.

Member, and former Chairman for more than twenty years, Peter Arnold, was unanimously elected as a Fellow of the Northumbrian Language Society (FNLS).



After more than ten years of work, we are pleased to announce that the final version of **The Dictionary** has been approved by the NLS Executive Committee. This means that we can now go on to the next stage, which is to get it printed and published.

This project was overseen by a small group of NLS members - Peter Arnold, Kim Bibby-Wilson, Katrina Porteous and George Wallace - and involved many other members of the Society, as well as the general public, who, in the early days supplied many dialect words from their own communities.

The process of printing and publishing can be a complicated business, so it may be some time before we manage to get it out, but we are delighted that all of the hard work by many people over the years has been successful. A meeting to progress the printing and publishing of the book was held on Thursday 5 August. We will keep you informed of progress.



From time to time, we get emails from a wide variety of people seeking information about the Northumbrian dialect.

Recently, a young man in Thailand wanted to know about the cultural, racial and linguistic make-up of the several peoples who lived in Britain, both now, and in the past. He wanted to know if the Northumbrian dialect was spoken by all of the people in Britain, and if it wasn't, what kind of linguistic and cultural features did these other people have.

There was quite a lot of emailing done to try and answer his questions, and he hasn't written recently, so, hopefully, he has now got the information he requires.



Kim Bibby-Wilson writes :-

Karen Corrigan (from Newcastle University) contacted me last month with information about a lecture to be given by Professor Joan Beal from Sheffield University.

It concerned the inaugural lecture to commemorate Professor Barbara Strang of the English Department of Newcastle University. Barbara was one of my and Joan Beal's tutors, way back before the Flood.

The event has passed, but it was recorded and is available online lasting just over an hour, and members might welcome the link. The title of the lecture is:

“Accent prejudice: #us an' all? “

Here's the link for members to see the recording:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yk5ptF_vu34



NORTHUMBRIAN LANGUAGE SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting 2021

Executive Committee Report 2020-2021

Period covered 1st May 2020 to 30th April 2021

Coronavirus Pandemic

The year was shaped and dominated by the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic which took hold in March 2020 in the UK. As a result of consequent restrictions all physical Committee Meetings, meetings and public events were cancelled from April 2020 to April 2021, these are detailed below.

Meetings

The Executive Committee normally meets every other month to deal with the Society's business. Most of the matters dealt with have to do with the planning of our regular programme of events, plus any other events that appear from time to time.

During the early part of this Executive Report year Committee matters were conducted by email exchanges and later by online meetings, one for a new Northumbrian Language Society (NLS) website and others for Committee Meetings.

The Charity Commission advice was taken by reference to their online pages and also sought by a telephone call. Decisions taken were recorded in line with this advice. The AGM was cancelled.

Events

These continue to be the main way we invite the public to join us to celebrate our dialect and thus were severely affected. However, the existing website continued to attract enquiries.

The cancellation of the 2020 Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering and Dialect Competitions, the AGM and Reed Neet in April 2020 were

followed by the cancellation of two new collaborations The Lost Words Dialect Competitions with The Word library: South Shields and the re-enactment of a lecture by Richard Oliver Heslop with The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle. The annual Roland Bibby Memorial Lecture and the National Dialect Festival in Penrith both usually held in October were called off as was the Yule Meet in December.

The 2021 Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering took place in April via online

events and the Writing competitions had previously gone ahead. There were a good number of entries in two Northumbrian dialect classes (but none in the junior/ novice dialect verse and dialect prose), some of the entries being carried over from the cancelled 2020 competitions. Katrina Porteous, judge and NLS President, was pleased at the high standard of entries.

Membership

There were 77 members in March 2021.

Merchandise

An idea from Treasurer John Davidson for an NLS postcard was followed up with some initial designs from a company and subsequent input from Committee members returned to the company.

NLS Websites

Intense development work by Committee member Richard Wilson took place over several months with other Committee members checking and testing a new website which was made live in September 2020 as northumbrianlanguagesociety.co.uk. The existing NLS webpages on the Northumbriana website are also available. Both websites attracted enquiries and/or interest and made up a little for the loss of physical events.

Publications

The Society's Newsletter has been issued by email and post several times during the year to keep members up to date with events and promote the dialect. Historical issues are now on the northumbrianlanguagesociety.co.uk website.

Enquiries and Other things

Broadcast in September 2020 the BBC Radio 4's Tongue and Talk programme put together by actor and writer Catherine Harvey recorded some of those participating in the October 2019 National Dialect Day held in Blackpool. Liz Elliott and Stuart Lawson were heard.

Thanks

Because we are a small charity, everyone who helps on the Executive Committee, or at events, is a volunteer, and without them, we can do nothing. So, once again we would like to thank everyone who has helped to keep our dialect alive, either by attending events, or by taking part, or by being a member of the Executive Committee.



Katrina Porteous and the Living-Language-Land Project

Katrina Porteous, our President and an award-winning poet, recently drew our attention to the British Council's Living-Language-Land Project. As part of the UN-sponsored COP26 climate change conference in to be held in Glasgow later this year, Living-Language-Land will share 26 words from endangered languages around the globe; words that exemplify the ways in which we relate to the environment and to each other.

Living most of her life on the Northumberland coast, Katrina has close ties to the fishing families in her area. These relationships not only inspire her own work but also make her acutely aware of the existential threats to the community's traditional livelihood and especially their disappearing language. So, in submitting a word to the Living-Language-Land project, she sought the support of local fisher-people who together will select a dialect word representative of the Northumbrian fishing community.

"After all," said Katrina, "it is their language."

The Living-Language-Land project will launch in July 2021 with the final selections to be announced in the weeks leading up to the November conference. For further information about the project, visit their website at www.living-language-land.org or follow them on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

We look forward to featuring the chosen word in the next issue of the NLS Newsletter. In the meantime, please join me in wishing Katrina and those representing the Northumbrian fishing, every success with their contribution.

Andy Bogle

Geordie Voted Most Desirable Accent in Babel Survey

“I lived in London for a while,” said the agent at Seattle airport as he checked me in. “The airline I worked for opened a call centre in Newcastle. They said it was because people loved to hear the Geordie accent. As an American I had to agree!” he said with a smile.

I was reminded of this when I read a headline in the Hexham paper, *“The Courant”*: ‘Geordie accent voted as the most desirable regional dialect in a survey by Babel’. The article referred to a survey carried out by the language training company, ranking the country’s regional accents. Geordie came top of the ‘Most Loved’ list and shared first place with Northern Ireland in those that ‘Sound the Most Fun’.

However, in a flush of pride following this validation of what most Geordies take for granted, we will ignore *The Courant’s* oversight. The words *accent* and *dialect* cannot be simply interchanged. An accent may, or may not be a component of a dialect, which is comprised of a unique vocabulary and grammar, as well as cadence (or accent). What is the difference? I cannot imagine phone operators in a Newcastle call centre holding their jobs very long if customers, when placed on hold, were told: “Haad on a bit, hinny, an divvent gan away. Aa’m jist gettin yor details tigheter.”

That is dialect!

Andy Bogle



A Note from NLS member Geoffrey Ridley:

The origin of the term “Geordie” and who is entitled to call themselves “A Geordie”

The Rebellion referred to in your recent article as taking place in 1745 is incorrect. It was the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. The Earl of Derwentwater, Dorothy Forster and other Northumbrian gentry raised an army in support of the Jacobite rebellion. It numbered some 3,000 horsemen and it called upon the citizens of Newcastle and Berwick to join them. The authorities in Newcastle called up the Trained Bands and the militia, mustering on Killingworth Moor, and requiring them to come into the town, which they did. The authorities blocked up all the gates with stone and lime mortar. The rebels gathered near Morpeth and then went to Hexham, hoping to surprise Newcastle by coming from the West. They called upon the Mayor and Aldermen to open the gates. They were told that this town was loyal to King George 1. The rebellion fizzled out, and the Earl of Derwentwater was convicted of high treason, and executed.

The townsfolk said they were “Geordie’s men” that is, loyal subjects of King George 1. There is a full account of these events in Brand’s history of Newcastle, published in 1789.

Newcastle was not involved in the rebellion of 1745, as the Jacobite army came down the west side of the country, via Carlisle, Penrith etc, and there was no threat to the town.

As to who is entitled to call themselves a Geordie, my understanding over the last 82 years is that it is anyone born within the sound of the bells of St Nicholas.

I was born in a nursing home in Elswick and I think that entitles me on my definition to be “a Geordie”. In point of fact, I have lived during my childhood in Gosforth, and in my adult life I have lived in various places in Northumberland.

I have no wish to be an exclusivist and I’m perfectly happy for anyone living in Newcastle, Northumberland or North Tyneside or generally in the north-east of England saying they are Geordies. I do think however, that the term ‘Geordie dialect’ is strictly applicable to the speech of the inhabitants of Newcastle. The Northumberland language is made up of several dialects depending upon which part of the old county you live in, and that is why I am so supportive of the Language Society’s efforts to preserve the unique vocabulary and speech of the area.

The Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering 2021 - Online Audience Statistics

This year's Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering was held virtually, over the internet, because, for the second year running, it was not possible to hold the event in its traditional format. The organisers worked hard to find ways to hold it online, and they are to be congratulated for making the effort, and pulling it off so successfully.

The statistics below show how many people watched the events online, and the numbers of people who made the effort to watch demonstrates just how popular this event really is. Nearly four thousand people in total attended online.

In addition to these "live" events, there was also a number of writing competitions which went ahead, and you can find a list of the winners of these competitions on another page of this Newsletter.

This brilliantly successful event shows what can be achieved when a group of determined people, working together, go that extra mile to make sure our resilient and magnificent Northumbrian culture is brought to as many people as possible! Congratulations to everyone who was involved!!

Morpeth Gathering online viewing stats 2021				
	Participants			
Video event	as at 12Apr			
Family Concert	247			
Grand Concert	511			
Clog-Making Demo	75			
Dialect Concert	198			
Elsie	96			
Clock Tower Tour	118			
Laidley Worm	266			
Gadgy Welcome	98			
Everett Parade Photos	83			
Jim Grant stories	58			
Art & Craft Exhibition	58			
Camera Club photos	98			
Art Gallery 1	874			
Art Gallery 2	223			
Dragon Making	46			
2019 Photos	308			
Vintage Gathering film	377			
SUBTOTAL	3734			
Zoom event				
Dance Workshop	20			
Singaround	34			
Session	53			
SUBTOTAL	107			
TOTAL	3841			

‘Northumberland Folk’ exhibition until 31st October

Across its four museums in the county, Museums Northumberland presents ‘Northumberland Folk’, a series of four new exhibitions by illustrator Jonny Hannah. Some of Northumberland’s strangest stories and most interesting characters are highlighted through Jonny’s extraordinary paintings and prints. Many of the Northumbrian stories illustrated in the exhibitions have been drawn from the museum collections, inspired by our heritage buildings and contributed to the project by members of the community.

Dialect features in many of the exhibits, and the display at Morpeth Chantry Bagpipe Museum includes banners celebrating Ashington poet and raconteur Raymond Reed (Fellow of the NLS) and our late chairman and one of the Society’s founders, Roland Bibby. Jonny Hannah’s contemporary work at the Chantry, described as a visual ballad from the borderland, delves into Northumbrian piping lore and delights in some of Morpeth’s local legends. Museum founder William Cocks presides over proceedings with his skeletal companion, and the illustrated ensemble includes artists and wizards, wonder women and rogues. Northumberland Folk at Morpeth Chantry Bagpipe Museum is free to visit.

There are details of the exhibition pieces online – with a video of Jonny describing what you see if you’re unable to visit in person - and you can buy original pieces of artwork, limited edition prints and gifts from the online shop. See the links below.

<https://museumsnorthumberland.org.uk/morpeth-chantry-bagpipe-museum/event/cocks-morpeth-medley-and-rant>

<https://museumsnorthumberland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/MORPETH-EXHIBITION-GUIDE-25-5.pdf>



The Woodcutter

Past the whispering sike of fair Newtown
Wi' leaves rustlin' under the feet
I heard me the soond of a woodcutter
As his axe howked a determined beat.

And aal was calm in the meadows
The Coquet in afternoon sleep
The Church clock it chimed in the distance
Answered by the inquisitive sheep.

To the right loomed aad Simonside's steep slopes
Proud guardians of aal who here dwell
And the woodman kept time to the music
Nature's chorus did swoop, soar and swell!

And the leaves made a sweet-scented carpet,
And the green fields stretched mile upon mile,
Pretty hooses sat snug in the distance,
May things be thus for mair than a while.

And the dreamy wind, fresh but inviting,
Having waked, for the stranger to greet,
Brushed my face, like to say, "come with me this way,"
While the woodcutter kept to the beat.

And for nowt new did yearn dear aad Rothbury
As it pine sentries reached for the sky
And the Coquet did smile and say
"Good afternoon, ye'll want for nowt mair till ye die."

Poem by James Tait

This was the winning entry in the Dialect Verse competition at this year's on-line Gathering

2021 Online MORPETH NORTHUMBRIAN GATHERING



Writing and Composing Competitions Results

B1 Song Composition

1 st	Graham Bell	"The Border Reivers Ride"
2 nd	Tom Patterson	"Blyth Sands"
3 rd	Charlie Chomse	"The Tiers"
Commended	John Homer	"The Lark Ascending"

B2a Melody Composition

1 st	Colin Bradford	"Lament for Bryan Jackson"
2 nd	Peter Dunn	"The Phoenix"
3 rd	Susan Clarke	"The Slow March of Time"
Highly Commended	John Gibbons	"The Frog in the Kitchen"
Highly Commended	Marina Dodgson	"The Latent Cannon"
Highly Commended	Brian Jacques	"The Lockdown Reel"

B2b Composing Excellence

1 st	Marina Dodgson
2 nd	John Gibbons
3 rd	Brian Jacques



B2c Variations Composition

1 st	Jon Shurlock	"Because he was a Bonny Lad"
2 nd	John Gibbons	"Kitty Frisk"
3 rd	Marina Dodgson	"Newcastle"

B3a Dialect Verse Open

1 st	James Tait	"The Woodcutter"
2 nd	Carol Dixon	"Wor Back Field Den"
3 rd	Graham Bell	"Don't Marry a Farmer"
Highly Commended	Robert Deacon	"Cappy"
Highly Commended	James Tait	"The Last Whistle"
Commended	Maggie Davison	"Pitman Practeese"

B8 Short Story

1 st	Lynne C Potter	"A Drover's Tale"
2 nd	Susan Dawson	"From One Newbiggin to Another"
3 rd	Bill Kendal	"A Doggy Tail"
Highly Commended	Susan Dawson	"A Wrong Turn"
Commended	Adrian McRobb	"Cresswell Hall"

B16 English Verse

1 st	Maggie Davison	"An Amble Childhood"
2 nd	Adrian McRobb	"Lindisfarne Mussel Girl"
3 rd	Adrian McRobb	"Kielder Water"

Is The Northumbrian Dialect Really In Decline?

Members of the NLS may have noticed some publicity recently suggesting that our dialect is declining so rapidly, that it will disappear completely during this century. We print below a response from Kim Bibby-Wilson, one of our Vice-Presidents, and the daughter of the Founder of the NLS, Roland Bibby. The question is: is our dialect on the way out, or is it a minor problem at the minute? We would love to print the views of members of the NLS, so, once you've read Kim's article, perhaps you would like to write a piece which we will publish in future editions of the Newsletter. Let us know what you think. You can contact me, Peter Arnold, the Editor, via my contact details on the front page of this Newsletter.

“Dear Lucas,

I've been asked by our Chairman, Stuart Lawson, to respond to your email in my capacity as Vice-President of the Northumbrian Language Society, which as you'll have seen is a charity dedicated to the study and enjoyment of the dialects of Northumberland, including the Tyneside variant Geordie.

This is a huge topic, and the findings of the survey touch not just on linguistics and science but also on history, philosophy and sociology, so it's hard to be brief! I can give you a quick rather light-hearted quote first, with translation, but then some of the rationale is laid out too. Please do read through to the end and use whatever you wish – I'm sorry I can't condense the whole thing easily.

Ee, hinnies, yon gadgies hev gien us a gliff, but divvent fash yorsels ower much – as lang as wuh mind wor ain canny tung an aall its soonds, wuh'll still be taakin about spelks, oxters an lonnens in fifty years' teyme.

= Good heavens, my friends, those [survey] chaps have given us a fright, but don't worry too much – as long as we take care of our own dear tongue with all its sounds, we'll still be talking of splinters, armpits and lanes in fifty years' time.

We've yet to scrutinise the recent study in detail and so cannot yet assess the credibility of its conclusions. We are not dialect-change deniers, but we hope optimistically and with fingers crossed that our region's long-standing resilience will withstand some of the influences affecting native speech patterns elsewhere. We note that in 2016 earlier publicity from the ongoing Cambridge study stated that while regional differences were disappearing, people in the north-east of England seemed "more resistant to the patterns of overall levelling in dialect". This tallies in part with findings from a survey of our own: i.e. during the 20th century greater mobility, media influences and the decline of traditional industries and their communities caused a rapid decline in the distinctive vocabulary and, to a lesser extent, pronunciations of Northumbrian (much of which echoes and preserves elements of the words, grammar and the vowel and consonant sounds of the original Old English language).

We trust that the characteristic Northumbrian sounds of “Aa wes gannin tappy-lappy alang theor ti thi toon” (= I was going rapidly along there towards the town) will resist the influences of things like “At the par'ee I sawra greep of free shteedents drawing in their bucks” (= At the party I saw a group of three students drawing in their books). These could well be the results of what the university study suggests is lazy articulation, when a speaker fails to move the lips or tongue adequately or accurately to make, for instance, a round “o” or “oo” sound, or causes a slurring or intrusion between what should be separate sounds.

Language is constantly changing through absorbing and adapting new elements, while dropping others. One of the clearest markers of traditional Northumbrian speech is the burr (the letter “r” coming from the back of the throat). It originated in the guttural sounds of the Northumbrian dialect of Old English, denoted by the “hr-” spelling beginning certain words, and was noted by Daniel Defoe in the 18th century, with the comment that the locals valued it as it denoted the antiquity of their tongue. This still survives but is nowadays infrequently heard, and of course with no examples of that sound nor indeed many of our local words on mainstream media, such elements are unlikely to continue for much longer.

We have always therefore urged native speakers to “use it or lose it” through normal conversation, reading, writing, singing and performing in dialect, but we also encourage bi-lingualism, so that Northumbrians not only maintain the language of their own community amongst themselves but also employ Standard English on occasions when they have to be understood by those English speakers unfortunate enough not to hail from the area!

Northumbrian needs to be widely acknowledged as a valid living language descended from not some sort of poor cousin of English, but in fact the venerable grandmother of modern English, as mentioned before. The version of Northumbrian spoken in Lowland Scotland, which since Anglian times has evolved into Scots, is proudly and heavily celebrated and promoted in that nation, with funding from the Scottish national government for an extensive education programme and publication of a constantly updated dictionary. The British Library has an ongoing oral archive of our accents; the network of existing English dialect organisations holds an annual National Dialect Festival (albeit paused by the pandemic) which puts the focus on a wealth of non-London-centric speech patterns and literatures - as the festival weekend moves around in its location each year there’s always much interest generated through the local media in the dialect of each host area.

Many people across history have feared that local speech will be swamped or replaced by alien sounds and words, especially with the sociological implications of one particular dialect being elevated into a supposedly more desirable “Standard English” with its “Received Pronunciation”. There were concerns at the turn of the 19th/20th centuries that compulsory education would wipe out most local differences within a generation. However, a hundred years later the Radio 4 series “Talk of the Town, Talk of the Country”, first broadcast in the 1980s and revived around the Millennium, concluded that the spoken language of Northumberland was still in good health by the start of the 21st century. But the new university study, with its scientific modelling of an imminent decline in local variations, is a worry to those who care about the distinctive language of an area and its community, valuing its fundamental role in encouraging a sense of identity and pride in the face of an increasingly bland and amorphous non-entity.

I hope this is of use!

Gan canny,
(= Kindest regards, Go carefully, Be safe)

Kim Bibby-Wilson (Mrs)
Vice-President, Northumbrian Language Society “



The Battle o Bamboro ... bi Maistor Norman Thompson

In Ite-teen Twenty-Six, Parliament wuz dissolved and a Genril Ilekshun follad.

Northumbalind had two Members and there wuz fower Candidates, two Whigs and two Tories. These fower Candidates wuz Lord Hoick, and he wuz the sun of Orl Grey; then Tommy Bowman, and he came from Bywell; H. T. Liddell, he wuz the sun of Lord Ravenswath, and Matt Bell, a collry owner.

The Poolin tuk place at Alnwick and lasted a fortnet. There was nee railways in them days, so aal the Voters had to gan by steamer from North Shields, and sum times they went by cuddy-trap. The Poll closed about fower o'clock in the efternoon ivry day, when the Candidates wud each mek a speech. Then they each hadn a band of their own, and they wud aal get together and mek that much noise you cud hear them aal ower Northumbalind.

Liddell wuz varry elikwent, Bowman wuz aalways jocular, Hoick wuz a bit sulky, but poor Matty Bell nivva knew wat t say, or wat t taalk about.

The highlight of the Poll wuz when Tommy Bowman and Lord Durham fell oot about sum insults that wuz hoyed about. They decided t fite it oot wi bare fists, so they went tiv a field not far from Bamboro Castle, and aal the Voters follad. Both the fitters wor about as much gud on the field as they waar on the platform, but aal the Voters wha mair consarned about whee wun the fite than we wun the Genril Ilekshun.

Eftor an excitin time wi aal went yem, and they still caal it “The Battle o Bamboro”.

Norman Thompson’s piece won the first Morpeth Gathering Dialect Prose competition in 1973. Bell and Liddell were elected by the Voters.

Aa'll Nivvor Be Famis Writ Bi Bob Bolam

“Cum up to Tyne Tees Tellyvision”, says Deas,
“An bring the skyeul choir along:
An if thi tek heed, then wi'll give them a feed,
An film them singin a sang”.

So we lowped on the bus, an wivoot too much fuss,
Quite soon we wor stannin in place;
Then they aall cleared thor throats, and Aa gov them thor notes,
An a big grin come ovver me fyace.

Conductor Aa'd be, an then sum folks might see,
Waat Aa lukked like, at least from the rear.
So cum the fowrth pair, Aa'd forsaken me lair,
An Aa stud reet oot front in the clear.

It went off aall reet, Aa waas in for a treat,
An thor's nee doot Aa felt pretty big;
But when the time came, waat a blow to me fame -
They'd replaced us wi “Porky the Pig”.

An the next week the same, this time Europe to blame;
Aa waas due on ti give a bit poem.
Farmin Ootluck's Chris Potter had wrote iv ees jotter,
A taxi he'd send to me home.

Then cum the let-doon, not a ride inti toon;
The bigwigs had solved Europe's butter;
An lads in the know put me oot o the show,
An left us at hyem just ti mutter.

So if ye're like me, seekin fame on TV,
An ye get yorsel aall iv a dother,
Then expect the worst, an decide at the forst
It's best in the end not ti bother.

Bob's poem was Placed First in the 1987 Gathering Open Verse Competition at that year's Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering.

**Here is a selection of dialect poems
by our Poet Laureate, Fred Reed,
one of the founding members of the
Northumbrian Language Society ...**

CONTINUITY

Yistorday is nivvor ended;
Aall its pains n joys are blended
In the spirit of the hoor,
By luv's grace n luv's pooer.
By the bloom lang past decayed
Aall the future is arrayed.
That lang past which men coont deid
Noo lives a hundredfowld instead.
Which is real n which are dreams?
Life is only whaat it seems.
Whaat are ye save whaat ye think.
On hell's threshhowld or hivvin's brink?
This ower late maist feuls hev thowt,
Save for whaat we luv, wo're nowt,
Save for whaat wuh dedicate
Wor utmost pooers t create,
Wor hairt proclaimin it's essential
T realisewor will's potential,
Or else it's aall a worthless dream;
An instant glint upon life's stream
That aw, se swiftly rushes on
T cavnors of oblivion.
Wi nowt t be remembered by
Except these words: "He didn't try".



THE WORM

Noo tyek a garden worm - ye'd not agree
In sum ways it's lots clivvorer than ye.
Ye howk it up n cut the thing in two,
But divvent think that puts it in a stew.
A thing like that wad fettle ye, Aa doot;
Each haaf of ye cud nivvor get about.
But such bisection gives the worm nee
bothor;
One haaf gans one way, n one the tother.
An when they meet they'll mutter as they
stare,
"Aa'm sure Aa've seen that fyess afore
sumwheor".



ABEUN CHOLLORFORD

Gan look doon from the Military Road
Which Roman officers se lang sin strode,
Forrivvor scheming, but for little worth,
Hoo t subdue the wild barbaric North;
An theer ye'll see whaat words cud not
define,

The beauty o the tree-waaed Northern Tyne,
Nee mair reddened wi claymore an sword,
Glinton i the sun, frum Chollorford.
The wettor movin wiv a stately gait
T gan n join its Alston Common mate,
As luvly as itself, the Sooth Tyne wettor.



NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES

Play us sum music of contented strain,
Roond-noted, warblin, haantin, silken, low,
A melody as leit as April rain,
An liquid as a purlin streamlet's flow;
Sweet sounds that will refresh like deepest
sleep,

Theor gowlden rays se like the sunset's
beams

Reflectin in a forest pool the deep
An wide infinity of soarin dreams.
Then let it be as Autumn's wistful wind
That whispers in the willas by the born
An croons aroond, as if its notes might find
In dooncast hairts the pooers of Gabriel's
horn.

Northumbria's sounds, pure as wor mountain
air,

Sweet as the thrush's trill at mornintide;
Northumbria's voice, wiv charms t banish
care,
Renewin strength whaativvor may betide;
Northumbrian pipes! Aye, Aa can hear the
soond

Of peewit's cry, of lairks, of wind n flud,
The benediction ower a warrior's moond,
The song serene - let life be brave n good!



Wor Editor sez - "Yuh mon think theor's ower
monny English words in these poems, but if'n
yuh sez them oot loud, yuh'll finnd that wor
Northumbrian twang jist jumps oot on yuh!!
Giv it a gan!! Yuh'll not regret it!!"

