

• Lister's Mill Bradford 1984 Ian Beesley

Photography, one of the great products of the industrial revolution, has always had an interesting, yet uncomfortable relationship with the portrayal of industry and workers. The reasons for this are many. In attempt to understand this tense and sometimes difficult relationship, this exhibition uses mainly previously unseen and unpublished photographs from the archives of the industrial cities and towns of the north of England. The industrialisation and de-industrialisation of Britain has had its greatest impact in the north, so it seems appropriate that the majority of images in this exhibition should be drawn from this region.

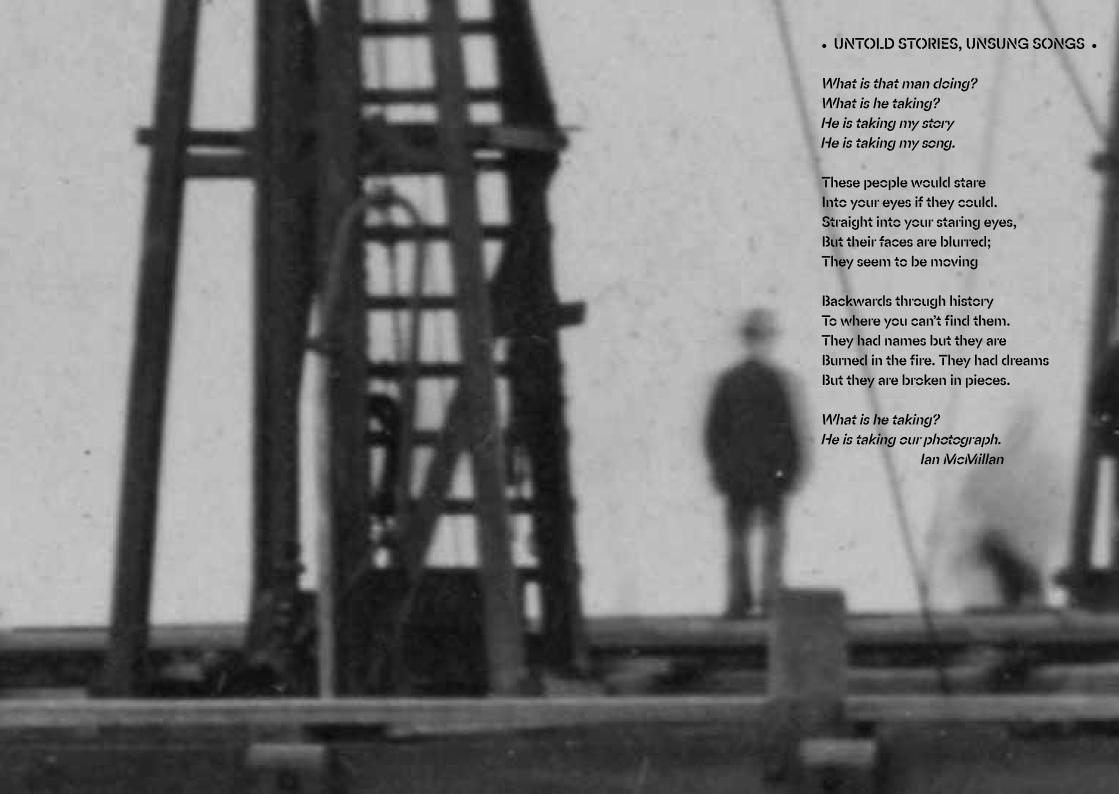
In 1839 William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877), a wealthy landowner and gentleman scientist revealed to the world his process of "photogenic drawing". His experiments were a response to his inability to draw; from the very beginning photography was integrally linked to drawing and painting. Fox Talbot and others saw it as a scientific continuation of traditional image making and so aligned it with the artistic perceptions and practices of the time. The first decades of photography were the sole prerogative of wealthy gentlemen amateurs who sought out the picturesque, the romantic and the classical. Clearly the brutal industrialisation that surrounded them had no place in their new image making process. It is these factors more than technical shortcomings that account for the failure of early photography to capture the emergence of working class.

In 19th century photography images of workers are rare. There are examples that contain workers, but it is important to distinguish between photographs, which happen to include workers, their presence being accidental or incidental, and photographs, which have workers as their main subject.

The tens of thousand of workers who built the industrial might of the Victorian age often only appear as blurs, distractions and intrusions.

"In all those blurred, imperfect figures of workers ... hovering, semi-transparent, ghostly... there is perfect and haunting metaphor for the position of the common people in mid-Victorian society – and indeed in the "making of its" history. For here, photography tells us, are human lives which are incidental, marginal, almost invisible: in short, eminently forgettable".





According to the census of 1861 for England and Wales, the gas industry employed 15,211 persons, telegraphy, 2,399; steam navigation 3,570; railways, 70,599 and photography 2,366; within three decades of its invention photography had become an important industry. As photography developed and became more accessible, the attraction of its accuracy in detail drew in those who were particularly interested in science and industry. As one historian put it (referring to the 1870s):

"Manchester photographers are not Camerons, Robinsons or Rejlanders, (famous affluent art photographers of the time) but dye stuff manufacturers, cabinet makers, opticians and pharmacists."

The emerging market was of people who were interested in detailed pictures of steam engines, industrial processes, machinery and buildings.

The Oldham panoramic is one of the greatest photographs of industrialisation in existence. It was taken in 1876 by the photographer Squire Knott and is a feat of great photographic skill and determination, Knott stood on the roof of mill with a very large and cumbersome whole plate camera and exposed nine glass plates ten inches by twelve inches in sequence.

The picture was taken during wakes week when the view wasn't spoilt by smoking chimneys and when most workers had left the town. The workers that appear in the panoramic are completely incidental and barely noticeable.

The sustained photographic documentation of industry began as the recording of process, machinery and product and in the later decades of the 19th century swiftly moved into commercial and corporate use i.e. advertising, the promotion of products and companies.



 The Oldham Panoramic Photographer Squire Knott 1876 Gallery Oldham

WIDE AND DEEP

The new has been spilled Over the old, spreading Across the fields, unstoppable

As history's turning page.
The old is retreating
From the new; a few

Sheep try to think How yesterday tasted But today and tomorrow

Sweep them away. A moment Built from chimneys, tight Streets, and the sense

That whatever sleep You get from now on Will be broken

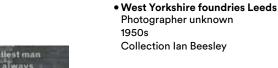
Into pieces, shifts,
Fragments, hooter-keenings.

Ian NiciViillan

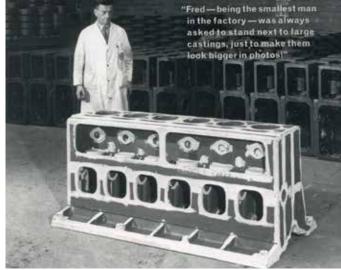




Photographer unknown 1950s Collection Ian Beesley



• The construction of the Manchester ship canal Manchester Photographer W.E.Birtles 1887-1893 Chethams Library Manchester



It did not take too long for the new professional class of photographers emerging in the 1870s to realise that any photographs of industrial processes, machinery and buildings needed an easily recognisable unit of scale to illustrate the sheer size and power of industrial process and product. The single anonymous worker became that unit of scale, available and compliant. Thousands of workers over the decades found themselves pressed into photographic service as a convenient and familiar unit of scale.

HOW SMALL, HOW VERY FAR AWAY

You could be a full stop At the end of a long sentence.

They told me I had to stand very still.

You could be a tiny stain At the edge of a clean white shirt.

They said they chose me because I was little.

You could be a flower Held up to the show the depth of the forest.

They said not to worry about how I looked Because the picture wasn't really of me.

You could be a star That gives us some idea Of the vastness of the sky.

Can I move yet? My arms ache.

Ian McMillan

Arrested in North Shields
 Photographer unknown
 1902-1916
 Tyne & Wear archives & museums

In the Victorian era the portrait was aligned with oil painting, an expensive and privileged medium, affordable mainly to the affluent upper classes. A portrait in oils conveyed privilege, status and significance. The invention of photography introduced a new medium for portraiture and one that was affordable to the emerging middle class, but it would remain outside the financial capabilities of the working class until much later that century.

Victorian portraits of workers are rare; "interested gentlemen" for anthropological or ethnographical reasons invariably commissioned those that do exist. The emergence of this new breed of the industrial worker was seen as "exotic" and their images became worthy of collecting just like the preserved butterflies and moths that graced many a Victorian drawing room.

These early examples of workers often show bewildered and fatigued subjects stood self-consciously against a studio backdrop. It is unlikely they would ever see their developed photograph. Some of the less fortunate members of the working class would have had an even earlier introduction to photography by courtesy of the police. As early as 1865 police forces in England had embraced the new technology for the recording and identification of criminals. These early portraits also embraced Victorian theories of anthropological criminology, the idea that criminals could be identified by the shape of their head and hands. These unfortunate sitters often appear dirty, unwell and malnourished, which leads us to conclude that the majority of the crimes they committed were the result of poverty. There are very few photographs of prisoners who appear to be middle class, well dressed and well nourished.



• FRAMED •

Straight off the shift And made to stand; Look into this Look straight at me Hold this whatever it is In your right hand Lock into this lens We call it a lens Stand still. Eyes open, If you please. Open. Look ahead. You are A representative Head still ringing From the deafening hours Of all your workmates. We will frame you.

Do you comprehend? Ian McMillan



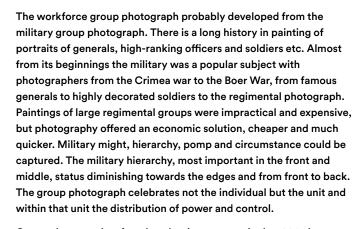
Wigan pit brow lass
 Carte de visite
 Wigan
 Photographer J.Cooper
 About 1880
 Doncaster Museum and Art
 Gallery: Cusworth Hall



 Miner Carte de visite Location Unknown Photographer Unknown Collection Ian Beesley



 WW1 military group Location Unknown Photographer Unknown.



Group photographs of workers begin to appear in the 1880s but are scarce; there was a steady increase in the following decades but an enormous surge in the production of group workforce photographs in the First World War. Women more and more populated the WW1 industrial workforce. The abundance of these photographs are perhaps an acknowledgement that the industrial workforce was in some ways comparable in importance to the military force. They were also a patriotic reminder to women as to where their duty lay, but we should also remember that photographs of women working in heavy industry would be seen as unusual if not shocking to large sections of the public.



Victoria Mustard workers
 Doncaster
 Photographer Unknown
 1880s
 Doncaster Museums and Art Gallery



 Cleaners of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Co

• A GROUP OF GROUP PORTRAIT QUESTIONS •

Who is this awkward family of half-strangers?
What sport do these exhausted team-mates play?
Who left these dolls at the corner of the playroom?
Where has this raggedy army marched from?
Who asked them to stand so still, so still?
Why do they stare so, without blinking at all?
Who has carved these figures from skin and bone?
When will they be allowed to move away?
Who is this chorus from a terrible, forgotten musical?
How do they know we are staring at them from the future?
Who will remember their names and tell their stories?

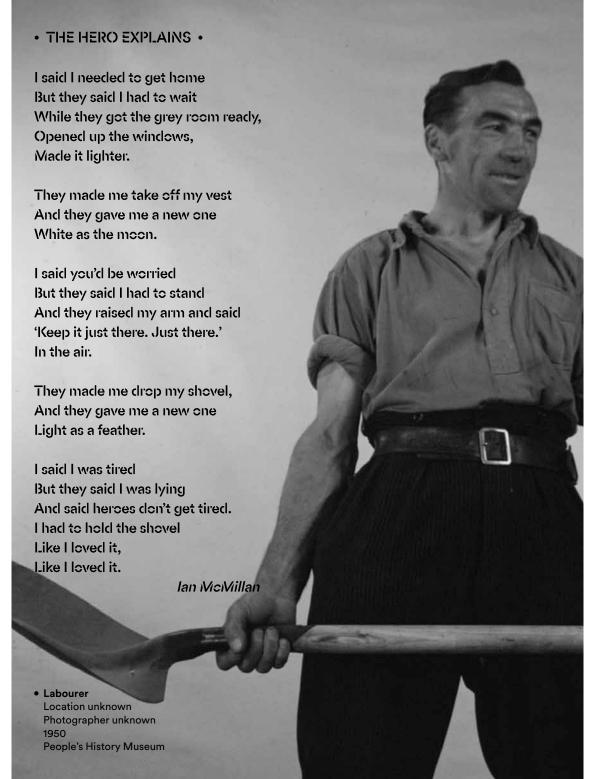
Ian McMillan

THE HEROIC



Heroic realism was a style of propaganda art used primarily in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and in Germany in the 1930s. The USSR in particular embraced photography as the medium for the representation of the heroic worker.

This visual style was soon adopted by Western democracies to promote their aims during the Second World War and in Great Britain continued through to the 1950s in the rebuilding and nationalisation of industry.





As cameras and photographic processing became even cheaper and more accessible, some workers became interested in documenting their own lives and communities. Instead of being a photographer from the outside looking in, this was the photographer inside looking around.

This insider's view gives us a whole new perspective within social documentary photography. One of the greatest exponents was Jack Hulme, who devoted his life to photographing the pit village of Fryston. He produced a fascinating, unique and revealing record of a mining community, something that was seldom done then or even now.

In recent decades documentary photography has shifted more towards conceptual, collaborative and political interpretations of industry and photographers have began to work on sustained projects involving the workforce rather than just recording them.



 Miners playing with their children
 Fryston
 Jack Hulme
 1940s
 Kirklees Image Archive



 Fanny Morgan and her sister Fryston Jack Hulme Date unknown Kirklees Image Archive

• GLIMPSE •

A sideways glance at how it really is;
A lifting up of artifice's long coat
To show the cheap clothing underneath
It was all we could afford

The steady gaze of the brand new camera Unblinking at the mate you sweat with Paying attention to the long ignored It was all we could afford

Kept in biscuit tins and old sheeboxes, Attention denied at the back of the shed A way of life so casually hidden It was all we could afford

lan McMillan



 George Wagstaff and his dog Fryston Jack Hulme Date unknown Kirkless Image Archive

In the late 18th Century the development of the steam engine was viewed as a contribution to the romantic visual imagery of the time.

As the industrial revolution gained momentum new steam powered mills were seen as "eye-catchers in the landscape", much more exciting than false ruins and follies.

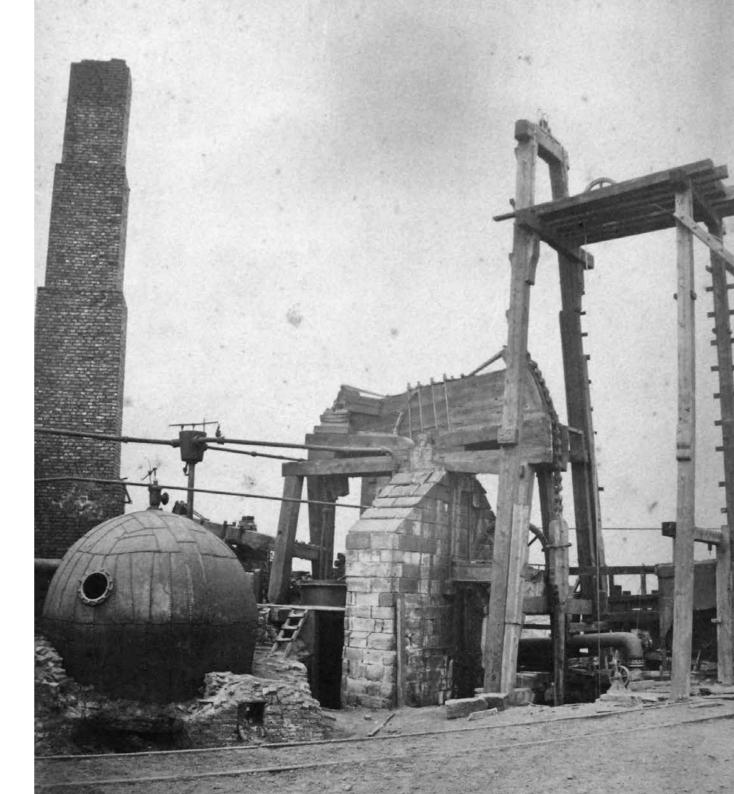
The majority of their admirers came from the middle and upper classes who distanced themselves geographically and socially from the harsh reality of the working conditions within those "eyecatchers" walls These romantic allusions of industrialisation were short-lived as the brutal polluting stamp of the industrial revolution became increasingly more evident. As the middle classes withdrew to their comfortable suburban villas, it was left to the writers like Dickens, Disraeli & Gaskell to propel the blackened image of the North into the bric a brac filled sitting rooms of the Southern middle class.

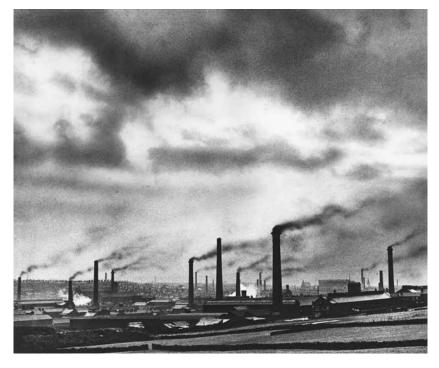
Photography dominated by affluent middle class gentlemen followed the tradition of European painting where the portrayal of labour played a subordinate if largely non-existent role. There was no room on the cluttered walls of the suburban house for any grim reminders of what surrounded them.

In the first half of the Twentieth century there appears to be a shift in how the industrial landscape was photographed and perceived, images of smoke belching chimneys, mills at night ablaze with light were popular. Whilst today we view these images with horror, in their day there were seen as picturesque celebrations of industrial might working at full capacity.

As British industry went into decline there was a trend (particularly in the 1960s and 1970s) for documentary photographers to make their way to the gritty North, to search out bleak industrial ruins and unemployed workers, contributing to a stereotypical image of the North.

Savoy engine
 Lumle Thicks, County Durham
 Photographer unknown
 1874
 Leeds Industrial Museum





• Smoking chimneys
Bradford
C.H Wood
1950s
Bradford Industrial Museum

• A LIGHT BREEZE CARRIES THE STINK INTO MY BACK YARD •

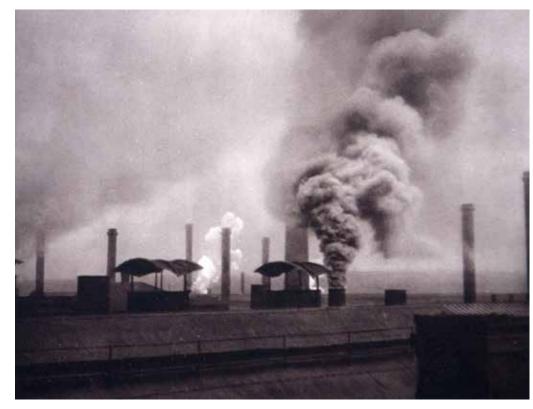
Smokescape, Chimneyscape Pitscape, Brickscape, Snap-tin-in-the-clarkscape A light breeze

Windowscape, Machinescape, Muckscape, Kidscape Chair-by-the-doorscape Carries the stink

Earlyscape, shiverscape, Heatscape, latescape Bike-clown-the-streetscape Into my back yard

Epicscape, scalescape, Rainscape, mistscape Tiny-figure-by-the-wallscape And there is no escape.

lan McMillan



• Steel works
Sheffield
E.Hoppe
1940
Collection Ian Beesley

Bobbin doffer carrying history

Look at this man, how he carries the bobbins

So carefully, each hand just so. Here, and here.

He's carrying the jokes and he's carrying the stories The Bobbin Doffers told each other in the brief rests They took, when the sun from the windows lit the wool in the air.

Look at this man, how he carries the bobbins

In a kind of practised geometry of balancing.

He's carrying the structure of a lost language,

A lost way of thinking, a set of skills and solutions That hung in the air for a while like wool in light, Then faded.

Look at this man, how he carries the bobbins

Like he's carrying history.

And he can't see where he's going, can't see which way History's heading. But we can see him.

lan McMillan

 From "Through the mill" Exhibited at the National Museum of photography, film & television Bradford.
 1986





Redundant brewery workers
 Tetleys Brewery Leeds
 From "T'Ales published
 by the Darkroom Press
 2010

JOSHUA TETLEY'S WELL

Falling nearly two hundred feet through Yorkshire earth Is Joshua Tetley's well

And to commemorate a loved one, or celebrate a birth We raised a glass of beer that was made from the water From Joshua Tetley's well.

Falling nearly two hundred years through Yorkshire life

Is Joshua Tetley's beer;

It's as heady as a home win, and sharper than a knife, Stronger than your granddad, and purer than your daughter That's Joshua Tetley's beer.

Now when the last pint's pulled and the well has dried Remember Tetley's name

And when the last door's closed and the last tear's cried And something's missing when you step outside

We'll remember Tetley's name;

Because a name, and a taste, live on for ever, Eternal as the endless changing Yorkshire weather...

lan McMillan April 2010



 Tetleys brewery workers attending the last management meeting Leeds 2010 IN THE POSH APARTMENTS WERE THE BREWERY USED TO BE Mummy I felt breath upon my shoulder In the kitchen I was buttering the toast I saw someone like daddy, only older; Ah, my dear, that's simply Joshua Tetley's ghost... Our living room is where they brewed the ale, dear And by your little pussy's scratching post Is where they canned and where they kegged; it's so clear We're haunted by old Joshua Tetley's ghost... Mummy I am nervous, I am frightened I thought it was steam from the Sunday roast My eyes dilated and my throat it tightened When I clapped my eyes on Joshua Tetley's ghost... He smiled and raised a glass and the he spoke, mum But then what really frightened me the most Is that he gestured to me and he said 'Come on. chum and have a drink with Joshua Tetley's ghost...' Oh darling never ever go with brewers Especially those with monocles: they boast They'll be so gentle and so loving to us But stay away from Joshua Tetley's ghost! Its too late mum I said I'd go and meet him And he'd take me to an old inn on the coast And he'd wine me and he'd dine me and I'd treat him.... Quiet, darling! He's just Joshua Tetley's ghost! But then behind them came a see-through phantom Who spoke in chilling whispered tones: 'Thou knowest Thou never can escape the long dead huntsman Who once worked here: I'm Joshua Tetley's ghost' So now the flat lies empty and deserted Like a shut-down pub without a friendly host Because a young and foolish daughter flirted With the fermenting heart of Joshua Tetley's ghost. The moral of this story is a plain one This brewery, once shut, will not stay closed; The site is sacred and will long remain one It's here forever; Joshua Tetley's ghost!

lan McMillan 3/12/2010 Tetley's Brewery Leeds

The Day the Beer Froze

There was sleet in the air And frost in the sky

The pigeons were frozen, Refusing to fly.

There was a big drip on the end of my nose The day the beer froze.

Nothing came from the taps

In the local pub

Old men shivered in caps

In the working men's club

I looked like a snowman in my winter clothes The day the beer froze

It began before dawn

The temperature fell

There was ice on my lawn

And I said "Bloody Hell

This could be disastrous for t'brewers tha knows" The day beer froze. And I was proved right. The beer wouldn't flow; It was stuck fast and

tight An icicle pose.

The plant looked like one of them ice-dancing show The day beer

froze.

The history's now famous,

The tale is now myth

But heat us, don't blame us

Leeds was four feet under Antarctic snows The day the beer froze.....

lan McMillan

 The day the beer froze Tetley's Brewery, Leeds Ian Beesley

• 21.12.10

On Tuesday the 21st December, the winter solstice, there was a lunar eclipse and the temperature in the center of Leeds plummeted To -16 c.
All the beer froze.





PITMAN SPEYKS

Nowt else suits. Desk job, security man

In a daft hat. No chance. Mucky and filthy And some bastard nicked the showers but still

Nowt else suits. Diggin and back brokken Every neet. Fingers hurtin. Neck hurtin. Head hurtin. But what else could I do, eh?

Shelf stackin? Driving a wagon, delivering stuff?

Serving tea? Taxi driving: where duz tha want ter gu

Madam? No chance. Nowt else suits. Ian McMillan

• "Babe"

Faceworker:End of a shift Hayroyds Colliery Yorkshire 2009 Ian Beesley





• Steelworker
Outukumpu Steelworks
Sheffield
Ian Beesley
2001

SONG OF THE MINER You could but be walking But I'm underneath you You could be talking I'm listening, I'm listening. You're in your house I'm sitting below you. You're drinking tea And I'm drinking tea And you could be sleeping And I am still working And you could be waking And I am still working And you could be washing And I'm filthy dirty And you could be singing And I'm underground So I cannot hear you But if you are dancing I'll look at the roof... I'll look at the roof Ian McMillan



• Tea-break
Hayroyds Colliery
2009
Ian Beesley

Nicknames Flat Battery Malfunction Rain Cloud Cheeky Man Child Chicken Legs Fluffy Buuny Rambo Nickname a descriptive name Chimp Flver Dwver Marble Gob Ready Money given instead or addition to the Chrome Dome Flymo Mardy Jap Red Rum Clipboard Fozzie Rimmer one belonging to a person, a Meercat place or thing. Clint Frodo Melon Smuggler Ripper (Webster's Third new Clock Watcher Road Runner Milk Bottle Monitoring Lizard International Dictionary of the Coco the Clown German Helmet Ronny Wrong Slot English Language.) Cod Eves Giblet Mr Burns Rotherham Bob Cold Mill Ghost Giddy Phil Mr Moon Aardvark Concrete Chewer Ginger Whinger Mr Muscles Sausage Stuffer Acid Bath Murderer Crab Glassback Mr Shush Savage Cabbage Crabbie Gloops Mrs Doubtfire Sawn Off Charles Bronson Addler Ali Acorn Crazy Horse God Muck Magnet Scaramanger Ali Act daft Crash test Dummy Golfin Dolphin Scoffer Ali Bib Liner Crew Gollum Nato Scratch Ali Bongo Crippin Gorbachov Nice Lad Sea Cow Avro Crocodile Shoes Gonzo Ninja Turtle Seaside Drunk Cuffv Grub Nobby Selwyn Ayatollah Cyclops Gunslinger **Nodding Dog** Shaky Banana Arm Noddy Show Pony **Bacon Gargler** Daisy Hand On Bollocks Not So Fat Steve Sid Side Valave Badger Damien Hard Man **Barnsley Pig** Dancing Blancmange Harry potter Odds On Side Winder **Barnsley Toon** Dancing Crab Harvy Potter's Granddad One & Gone Slide Show Bob **Basil Brush** Hazel One Blank Stig of the Dump **Dancing Tulip BBC** Danger Mouse Hector One Egger Silverfox BDF Dead On Dave Herman the German Skipants Oz Ozzie Owl **Beach Ball Belly** Dickie Tickler Hills Have Eyes Slugger Beefv Dog On Head Hinch Snake Dolphin Honey Monster **Pampas** Snap On Reebok Bent legs **Hoover Junior** Paper Clip Bender Birdie Doris Sorry Big Boy Doppelganger **Hoover Senior** Pappy Fireman Sparrow Hawk Big T Dr Death Horse Pelican Nick Sparrow Neck Billy Whizz Drag Arse Hotshot Penfold Spats Bitter & twisted **Dronfield Troll** Polly Spit the Dog Inch Blackpool Joke Shop face **Duck Feet** Pomegranate Stickdot.com Blister Ironside Poorly Chicken Stiffy Blob **Edward Scissor Teeth** Ivan Pop Strange Occurrence **Bobby Charlton** Embalmer Popeye Strawberry Knob BOF Emily's Lad Jack Palance **Pudding** Sluts Boney M Endo Jap General Pup Sucked in Face Jewish Handbag Salesman Bownsey Psycho Surgeon Breadcake Face Like a Welders Bench John Call Me Neil Pie Edger Brush Fairground Clown Johnny Appleseed Pig farmer Taff Bumbag False Nose & teeth Pig's trotters Taffy Kid Tanked Up Ted Bungalwo Pinner Fanny **Butch wart** Fanny 2 Kinky Plua Tattoo **Busted Settee** Knicker Sniffer **Pockets** Fat Arse Terry tension **Busy Brothers** Fat Bloke Poison Dwarf Three Toed Sloth Fat Controller La La Pol Pot Tefal Lard Arse Cabin Cruiser Fat Pat Ten Bars

Little Manhole

Quick legs

Termathingey

The Bude

Captain Pig wash

Carpet Fitter

Fat Steve

Fish Whisperer

Toby Jug Toffee Chewer Toggie Tom Thumb Tommy Traffic Top Box Top Ten Topper Tots Trestle Leas Trico Triped Turnip treader Twenty-Four Volt Walt Twenty Players Two Dogs Typewriter Tyson Umpa Lumpa

Umpa Lumpa Upside Down Head

Velcro Vicar of Dibley Virgin

Wash Pots Wasp Weetabix Whiney

White Collar Shit Man

Willy Wise Frank Wobble Gob Wobbling Walt Worm

Yogi Yuppie

A SONG OF GOODBYE

Farewell, Hand on Bollocks,

Farewell, Basil Brush,

Farewell, Seaside Drunk and Sea Cow

You're silent and weeping under history's crush You're names your memorial now

See you, German Helmet,

So long, Tanked Up Ted,

Goodbye, Sausage Stuffer and God

You're names resonate through the roads of my head The names of the daft and the odd

And the funny and friendly. The helpful and kind

The sarky and smelly

The fat and half blind

The one's who you'd laugh with The one's you'd laugh at

The one's you'd go miles to avoid The one's you'd buy drinks for The one's who'd drink pop

The one,s who'd just get you annoyed Just the names shouting up from the void

So goodbye Milk Bottle, Pol Pot and Cod Eyes Goodbye Dog On Head and Duck Feet

Hang on to the memories that will never die Of comradeship forged in the heat......

lan McMillan



CARDERS · CASTERS · COMBERS FETTLERS·DOFFERS·LIGGERS TATLERS·FITTERS·BURLERS MENDERS-SORTERS-WEAVERS SPINNERS-GRAFTERS-PORERS CORERS · PATTERNMAKERS STAMPERS · MULESPINNERS WINDERS DYERS BLEACHERS SCOURERS · WARPERS · POETS PLATE LAYERS · ROADRUNNERS CAPSTEAMERS · SHOT-FIRERS PHOTOGRAPHERS · FITTERS TIP-STRETCHERS · PACKERS HOOD TURNERS BALERS QUENCHERS · MINERS · SMITHS BREWERS.OVERLOOKERS SLUBBERS · PRESSERS · JOINERS LEADBURNERS · FELLMONGERS