



P O E M S

—BY—

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The Railroad Poet

ALTON, - Ont.

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*ASTON, PA.*  
*no. (189-?)* *but in weather*  
*very dense*

## P O E M S

### A Song Composed When a Lad of Fifteen.

'Twas on the last of June, brave boys,  
A peeler left his home,  
To have a spree in Mono  
To Devlin's he did come.

He fetched with him a brown jug,  
To treat Devlin's family,  
And that was the commencement  
Of all his jolly spree.

The whiskey, it was very good,  
And he did it enjoy,  
He cut up about the house,  
He was a droll old boy.

They wanted him to go to bed,  
He said it was too soon ;  
He hopped and skipped upon the floor  
Just like an old raccoon.

When I sat down beside his wife,  
To have a little chat,  
He staggered o'er to where I sat  
And said I was a brat.

My temper then began to rise,  
And I called him a liar ;  
I clinched him fast, and threw him down,  
And we both fell in the fire.

Come, all you jolly fellows !  
When'er you want a spree,  
Just come to Jimmy Devlin's,  
And welcome you will be.

And if you can behave yourself,  
You will have lots of fun.  
So now good-bye to my enduring friends,  
For my song it is now done.

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### The Old Pile Driver.

It was in the month of October,  
As you may understand,  
We shipped with Captain Gartley,  
Who gave the bold command.

Upon the old pile driver,  
 In order to try our fate,  
 With Phil. Randalls on the quarter deck  
 To act as our first mate.

Ed. Walker was our conductor,  
 He was an able man,  
 His arm went up, the driver moved,  
 When his orders were in hand.

One day he killed a muckle beast  
 Each hair was like a pin  
 He took him to the Severn bridge  
 And chucked old porkie in.

Our engineer was Oliver Guard,  
 Who nobly filled the bill,  
 The first day he worked so hard  
 That he suddenly got quite ill.

Alexander, the fireman,  
 Was chosen on the spot  
 To fill the place made vacant,  
 And he filled it to the dot.

Our fireman, being promoted,  
 Another had to be found ;  
 John Harkies at last was chosen,  
 As the fittest on the ground.

So stately he moved about,  
 No need there is to be slower,  
 As he chucks the fire and tests the water,  
 And then puts on the blower.

Will Worden was our cabin boy,  
 As sprightly as a kitten,  
 As down the stays and up the sways  
 So nimbly he'd be flitting.

Charlie Carr would go aloft,  
 Just to release the hammer,  
 When things did not work right,  
 He was almost sure to D— her.

Swing your leads and lower your pile  
 Until she strikes the river,  
 Lower your hammer and hit her once,  
 And make the old thing quiver.

Will Maclam was also in the crew  
 As by this time you know it ;  
 When in a humorous state of mind  
 The men call him a poet.

The men below, we'll not forget,  
 Although we're in a hurry ;  
 For here we'll find our second mate,  
 His name is Johnny Murray.

George Warden, his assistant,  
 So nimbly moves about ;  
 One fatal day he got a knock,  
 That almost knocked him out.

There were Dave and Arthur Robertson,  
 Two of Scotland's pride,  
 Were assisting in the good work  
 With Bob Phillips on the side.

At last the piles were driven,  
 To load up we proceeded,  
 And Captain Gartley was advised,  
 At Blackstone he was needed.

Accordingly, our crew was split ;  
 We hope it's not for long ;  
 And just for lack of humorous wit,  
 We'll have to close our song.



### Life in a Railroad Boarding Car.

Have you ever worked on the railroad,  
 And lived in a boarding car,  
 Where every moment of your life,  
 You may expect to get a jar.

Where the brakie with a knowing wink  
 Will say, "watch me touch them up,"  
 And if your table should be set,  
 You will lose a plate or cup.

Or perhaps your only piece of meat,  
 With no more in the larder,  
 Is with the soup upon the floor,  
 Because it can't get farther.

And when your meal is finished,  
 You will heave an honest sigh,  
 And think of better days to come  
 In the sweet bye and bye.

Then some will wash the dishes,  
 Another will sweep the floor,  
 While the cook generally goes to bed,  
 With the bugs to have a snore.

And when your day's work is done,  
 You roll into the rugs,  
 With canvas sheets and horse hides,  
 So as to exclude the bugs.

When you get up in the morning  
 Feeling as if you were tight,  
 Some sympathizing friend will say,  
 How did you spend the night.

"Of bugs I slew a dozen,  
 And threw them on the floor,  
 The vermin crawled upon my neck,  
 And I left them in their gore."

You will show your lumps and blood stains,  
 And for sympathy implore,  
 But the other chap will swear and say,  
 "Of bites I've had a score."



## The Railroad Fireman.

With tireless hands, he shovels the coal  
 Into the thundering monster's maw,  
 And for hours and hours he trusts his soul  
 To a God whom he never saw.

Hour by hour his life depends  
 On the care of the other man,  
 As he scans the track where it slopes and bends,  
 Keeps watch as best he can.

Swiftly the miles go flitting away,  
 As the tireless monster speeds ;  
 And bravely he labors as best he may,  
 Giving the food it needs.

And if danger arise while his eyes are dim,  
 As he looks into the fire's glare,  
 And must trust to the skill and care  
 Of him who sits beside him there.

He must not sit with his arms at rest,  
 And watch for the danger sign ;  
 He must only hope they do their duty,  
 Who are working along the line.

For hours and hours his work goes on  
 And hour by hour his fate  
 Depends on the care and call of one,  
 Who may give the word too late.

The hiss of the steam is the only song,  
That he ever hears or knows ;  
And in every throb as he rushes along,  
The worth of his toiling 'shows.



### The Ground Level Gang.

While out upon the track  
I met a pair of chaps ;  
They were drinking at the watering place,  
And eating ginger snaps.

They invited me to join them,  
Of course I did comply ;  
I knew they were hard-working chaps,  
For the sweat was in their eye.

I asked them what their work was ;  
They said they were taking levels  
Along the track at Credit Forks,  
Where hills are plumbs and bevels.

I asked them what their names were,  
For their faces I had seen ;  
One of them, the tallest chap,  
Was Polly Pirkens, of Paddington Green.

The other chap was Bellinger,  
Also from the Queen City,  
They worked quite hard, their stay was short,  
By gobs, it was a pity.

They caught some of the finny tribe,  
In spite of the fish monger,  
Who gets his bread for catching chaps,  
And thereby kills his hunger.



### The Redmond Poem.

They say that Redmond's down and out,  
That his railroading is ended,  
Which sure must be a dreadful loss  
To the company he befriended.

Some Owen Sound ladies now feel sad,  
For as he's gone they miss him,  
And if they'd known he was going so soon,  
They'd all been here to kiss him.

He was a widower bold, if the truth he told,  
 In the place where he was boarding,  
 But they are on his game just the same,  
 And the lies that he's been hoarding.

We do not know what caused the change,  
 That he left a good position ;  
 Whether it was he lacked common sense,  
 Or feared he'd get a licking.

There's Jerry Long, both young and strong,  
 Could whip him in a minute,  
 And if he tackled Eric Erbe,  
 He'd find he wasn't in it.

Joseph Wise makes no disguise  
 Oi how little he adored him ;  
 Though up in years, we have no fears,  
 That Redmond e'er could floor him.

Wilber Erb is an honest chap,  
 Who seldom speaks when toiling ;  
 Though in his eye he could not deny,  
 His Canadian blood was boiling.

Will Maclam is our oldest man,  
 Though quiet he may seem,  
 Would welt his ear for his mother dear,  
 If he got up the steam.

Now Redmond's gone, we do not care,  
 We'll do the best we can ;  
 We'll neither weep, nor lose our sleep,  
 For we have a better man.

William Johnston is our foreman now,  
 We hope with us he'll stay ;  
 There will be no trouble in our camp,  
 For him we will obey.



### The Musical Tinsmith Boy.

In Alton of old, worked a tinsmith bold,  
 He was a youth with bright blue eyes ;  
 Old rags were bought, new tins were sold,  
 And five foot seven was his size.

His horn he would toot like a gay galoot,  
 And the neighbors would listen with joy ;  
 But the passers-by would threaten to boot  
 The musical tinsmith boy.



One fine summer's night when the stars were bright,  
 And the moon was shining clear,  
 He struck through the fields with his heart so light,  
 To see his Emmeline dear.

His heart went thump, as he sat on a stump  
 Inside of the garden wall ;  
 For the bull-dog Towse was tied to the pump,  
 And the chain was exceedingly small.

From under his arm he took his horn,  
 And tooted a serenade  
 In order to soothe old Towser's wrath,  
 And awake the slumbering maid.

But for music's hest the dog had no taste,  
 He broke his chain in his wrath,  
 And the tinsmith boy in his urgent haste,  
 Fell down on the slippery path.

The curtain we'll draw, on what Emmeline saw,  
 From out of her window high ;  
 Three samples of cloth in that bull-dog's jaw ;  
 "Poor fellow," she said, with a sigh.



### Composed on Finding a Dog Killed on Rock Curve.

One winter's day as I went West,  
 After cleaning switch and frog ;  
 Down by the end of the Rock Curve bend  
 I found an old dead dog.

It did seem queer as I drew near,  
 For he was covered in snow ;  
 To view him more, I turned him o'er,  
 On the rump he'd got a blow.

I picked him up and cast him forth  
 Saying, lie there you son of a B—— ;  
 Some future day, if you go that way,  
 You will find him in the ditch.

No more he'll hear his master's call,  
 Or chase the little pig ;  
 No more he'll nip old Spotty's heels,  
 Or worry Grandpa's wig.

No more he'll chase the neighbor's cat,  
 Until he strikes the fence ;  
 For upon the track he got a whack,  
 And he's been sleeping since.

## ALTON.

As I walked out one afternoon  
 To view old Alton 'round,  
 I thought that I would write some verse,  
 Of what was in our town.

There's Robert Clark, the livery man,  
 His office is on Queen Street,  
 And if you want to take a drive,  
 He'll fit you out complete.

And if by chance death call around,  
 As he is sure to do ;  
 This man has hearse and coffins,  
 And keeps fine caskets too.

Henry McClellan keeps a feed store  
 And tinsmith shop combined ;  
 Where bran and shorts and flour good,  
 You are always sure to find.

And if by chance he does run out,  
 Just call at the West End mill ;  
 Where you will find his brother Chess,  
 Who all your bags will fill.

Ed. Wellwood keeps the Willis House,  
 The Willis House keeps him,  
 And in his dining-room and bar,  
 All things are neat and trim.

So when you want a glass or meal,  
 Why this is just the stand ;  
 He caters to the public wants,  
 And feeds the inner man.

John Davis is our Postmaster,  
 And keeps a general store ;  
 You cannot easily miss the place,  
 The sign is o'er the door.

John Lovell is a lovely man,  
 He keeps the choicest meat ;  
 He's always there, and the price is right,  
 And its lovely stuff to eat.

Tom Vanwyck is our mail man,  
 He drives the covered bus ;  
 His horse is good, his rig is good,  
 That's good enough for us.

He once did own the fastest horse  
 You could find in all creation,

Once on a time he missed the train,  
He caught her at next station.

Donald McLean is a painter good,  
He will paint your house or sign ;  
So when you have a job to let,  
Just keep this man in mind.

For when he works he never shirks,  
But sticks right to his job ;  
He can paper fine, or kalsomine,  
And it's no penny daub.

J. L. Meek runs the Alton mill,  
He runs it over time ;  
He could not fill the orders,  
If he did not run till nine.

He will crush your grain and grind your wheat,  
And give you first-class flour ;  
And seldom ever will keep you late,  
When he can get the power.

There is the Alton Foundry,  
It's run by Dick & Son ;  
Where all things that are cast or hammered,  
In first-class shape are done.

They keep a staff of workmen,  
Who understand their trade ;  
Waggons, sleighs, sawmills and drays,  
And likewise bridges are made.

There's the Alton carriage factory,  
We may mention with the others ;  
When people want a first-class rig,  
They come to Barber Brothers.

They are men of wide experience,  
They're natives of the soil ;  
You will always find them at their work,  
They are not afraid of toil.

James Martin is a baker good,  
He bakes both white and brown ;  
And keeps the best of buns and cakes  
Of any in the town.

He also keeps fine groceries,  
And canned goods on the shelf ;  
You needn't take my word for it,  
Call and see for yourself.

Alton has a butter factory,  
 That we know is hard to beat,  
 And James Smith is proprietor,  
 He keeps all things clean and neat.

A. Mason keeps a grocery store  
 And likewise boots and shoes ;  
 You can treat your lady to a pair,  
 Or ice cream if you choose.

He also keeps a drygoods store,  
 With all things in that line ;  
 His clerks are most obliging,  
 And his trade is growing fine.

William White is another man  
 That keeps a general store,  
 Where you will find his groceries good,  
 He has boots and shoes galore.

Mr. Motheral is a barber good,  
 With towels neat and clean ;  
 Come in and try him for yourself,  
 His razors are sharp and keen.

He also is an optician,  
 And treats defective sight ;  
 If your optics are not working good,  
 He'll fix your glasses right.

He also keeps a candy store,  
 And likewise postal cards ;  
 To beat him as a business man,  
 We know it would be hard.

The blacksmith shop near Irish town  
 Is run by Storey and Son ;  
 They will shoe your horse, or shoe your sleigh,  
 It's here good work is done.

There is another blacksmith,  
 Will Roweliffe is his name ;  
 He is quite a baseball enthusiast,  
 Because he loves the game.

But then he is a good blacksmith,  
 He's been at it since a boy ;  
 But when he hears the words "play ball,"  
 It's then he jumps with joy.

Cuthbert, our C. P. R. agent,  
 Almost escaped our memory ;  
 When you want to see Rhode Island Reds,  
 Call around and see his hennery.

Willis Coulter keeps the grocery store  
 We must not forget to mention ;  
 If you favor him with your orders,  
 They'll receive his best attention.

Dr. McKinnon is our medical man,  
 Who tends the people's ills ;  
 We sometimes have to call on him,  
 Though we dislike doctor's bills.

But he has been very successful  
 With patients he's called to treat ;  
 And if they obey his orders,  
 They'll soon be on their feet.

Dan Worts is our chemist ;  
 What the Doctor prescribes, he fills ;  
 He keeps good drugs and medicines,  
 For all our various ills.

J. M. Dods owns the Knitting Mills  
 In the West End of the town,  
 Where "O. K." goods and pretty girls  
 Are always to be found.

You'll find no shoddy in this mill,  
 Only the choicest wool ;  
 And by improvements lately made,  
 On the trade he has the pull.

There's the Finnegan Brothers ;  
 They keep the brick hotel,  
 Where sister Maggie is bar maid,  
 And treats the public well.

She will fill your glass, or cook your meal,  
 Which e'er you may desire,  
 And if she sees you're wet or cold,  
 She'll build a rousing fire.

But one of Alton's best industries  
 Is that famous knitting mill,  
 Where yarn, and hose, and underclothes  
 Are turned out with tact and skill.

Albert Lake is manager of  
 This grand old knitting mill ;  
 George Ward is his assistant,  
 A man of noted skill.

No man can hide from those that ride,  
 The castle above the mill ;  
 Each state and row will plainly show  
 The pride of Beaver Hill.

William Algie is proprietor,  
 And with loved ones he reposes ;  
 He's mostly found upon the ground,  
 When he's not among the roses.



## L O S T .

A small boy about the size of a man, barefooted, with his father's boots on. He had an empty bag on his back, containing two railroad tunnels and a bundle of bung holes, etc. Wore a mutton chop coat, with bean soup linings. He was cross-eyed at the back of his neck and his hair cut curly. He was last seen sweeping wind off the public library to raise money enough to buy one of Maclan's poems.



### The Owen Sound Section Gang.

in Owen Sound yard there is a gang  
 Of brave and stalwart men,  
 Consisting of six railroad lads,  
 But there are sometimes nine or ten.

Jim Osborne, he comes around sometimes,  
 And cuts the forces down ;  
 There's always trouble in the wind,  
 When this old jay's around.

Bob McIntosh is a foreman good,  
 He's boss of the jolly crew,  
 And when they're out upon the track,  
 He tells them what to do.

Bob Bennett is a good section man,  
 And he sometimes runs the jack ;  
 When in the yard he's on his guard,  
 To keep aright the track.

Tom Bennett is the funny man,  
 He will meet you with a smile ;  
 He will crack a joke or sing a song,  
 Good natured all the while.

Elmer Wood is a workman good,  
 With the spike maul he's quite handy ;  
 His complexion's fair, he has auburn hair,  
 And his moustache its a dandy.

There's another chap we'll not forget,  
 His name is William Frazer ;  
 He can pull a spike, or swing a hammer,  
 With any other jay, sir.

### The Cataract Pit.

In Cataract of old worked an engineer bold,  
 He was a youth with bright blue eyes ;  
 He would handle his lever, and he was no deceiver,  
 And five foot six was his size.

His whistle he'd toot like a gay galoot,  
 And the boys they all thought it so queer,  
 That Doug. on the car, he would if he dare,  
 Kick our cute little engineer.

There was an old bum from Windsor he came,  
 Pat Warnock was his name ;  
 He was working with Mooney, they were both quite  
 looney,  
 But they got there just the same.

As they stood on the bank, they looked like a crank,  
 As they were gazing all around ;  
 God bless your soul, they were too lazy to pole,  
 And they were trying to gape it down.

### Cataract Snow Gang.

Harry Sythes, the railroad man ;  
 He's boss of a jolly crew,  
 And when it comes to clearing the track,  
 He knows well what to do.

'Twas in the month of February,  
 In the year nineteen eight ;  
 When the C. P. R. was blocked with snow,  
 And the trains were always late.

'Twas then he came to the Alton boys,  
 Saying, "how would you like to go,  
 To work a while on the C. P. R.,  
 And clear the cuts of snow ?"

The boys said with a nod of the head,  
 "If you secure the rocks,  
 This very day we'll go with you  
 To work with Kelly and Cox."

"Then come along," says Harry,  
 "We pay one forty per day,  
 And every cut it must be cleared,  
 Before you get your pay."

So the boys they took their shovels,  
 And soon were on the line,  
 And soon the cuts were widened  
 By a jolly crew of nine.

There never were such piles of snow  
 Since that on section three,  
 And there need not be another blockade  
 If the Alton boys are free.



## EPITAPH

### On the Burial of Crozier Dodds' Sow.

You old Black Sow, we plant you now,  
 And what more can we do ;  
 For Gentiles' meat, you're good to eat,  
 Though cursed by every Jew.

Upon this sod you've often trod,  
 When you were in your youth ;  
 But your end it came, and you're to blame,  
 For trespassing on the Bruce.





