



Hokum Leeries
An interview with the Three Wise Men
Prestonpans 2005

On the seaside bench
 Provided by the council –
 Three local heroes
 Cradle their morning cans
 And contemplate the Paps o’ Fife,
 Alas! No poetry in their life!

But joy! Whit joy, tae sit awhiles,
 Suppin thegither wi’ sardonic smiles!

Yin day the meenister up yonder brae
 Came doon tae save oor heroes frae oblivion –
 All part – he thocht – o’ life’s guid work,
 Enhancing God’s dominion.

The crab traps creaked
 And the promenade puddled
 As the man o’ cloth descendit
 Tae interview the fuddled.

“Fine morning, my good men!”
 Fired frae point-blank range
 This took oor Hokum Leeries by surprise...
 “And how are we today?”

The first looked up wi’ de’ilment in his eye
 And said:-
 “My dearest hope for now is when I die
 I’ll jine the Big Man’s brewery in the sky!”

“Alky? No me!” the second cried...
 “I jist sit here wi’ them
 an while awa the time –
 as far as I’m concerned,
 This life’s jist fine!”

The third man didnae speak.

“Have ye seen the mural in the Burns’ shelter?”
 The meenister changed his tack,
 “It’s the tale o’ Tam o’ Shanter!”
 And now warming to his creak, he mused:-
 “I wonder if Burns ate Queenie oysters
 quaffed wi’ Fowler’s Heavy?”

The first man:- “Aye! Tae hone his blade!”
 The second:- “Aye! Burns liked his bevv!”

At last the third man spoke:-
 “Whae’s MURIEL? BURNS? BURNS SHELTER?
 So that’s whit it is, Chrissakes!
 It hasnae sheltered US –
 We cannae force the gates!”

John Lindsay, “The Lammermoor Poet”
 Poet Laureate to Prestoungrange
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