

The Dalesman's Litany

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It's hard when folks can't get their work where they've been bred and born

When I was young I used to think I'd bide my time 'mid the roots and the corn

But I've been forced to flee the town so here's my litany
From Hull and Halifax and Hell good Lord deliver me

When I was courting Mary Anne the auld squire he said one day
I've got no room for wedded folk choose to wed or stay
I could not leave the girl I loved so town we had to flee
From Hull and Halifax and Hell good Lord deliver me

I've worked in Leeds and Huddersfield where I've addled honest brass
In Bradford, Keightley, Rotherham, I've kept my bairns and lass
I've travelled all three ridings round and once I've been to sea
From Hull and Halifax and Hell good Lord deliver me

I've been through Sheffield lanes at night 'twere just like being in hell
The furnaces thrust out tongues of flame that roared like wind o'er the fell
I've sammed up coal in Barnsley pit with muck up to my knee
From Hull and Halifax and Hell good Lord deliver me

I've seen grey fog creep o'er Leeds Brig as thick as Bastille soup
I've been where folks are stowed away like rabbits in a coup
I've seen snow fall on Bradford Beck as black as ebony
From Hull and Halifax and Hell good Lord deliver me

But now my children all have flown to the country I'll go back
There'll be forty miles of heathery moor 'twixt me and the coal pit slack
And oft at night as I sit round the fire I'll think of the misery
From Hull and Halifax and Hell good lord deliver me