BACK STORIES

LOCAL HEADLINES IN DUNDEE SONGBOOK DRAMA

Friday, 21st August 2015

Dundee - 145

DEADLINE CARRIAGEWAY



I see the hailstones falling as I cross the Fintry Road I have to make the clock in and pick up another load But the water on the windscreen makes it hard for me to see And my mind is on the deadline

I SHOULDN'T HAVE STAYED UP DRINKING, SHOULD HAVE GONE TO BED LAST NIGHT

BUT TIMES ARE HARD AND MY WIFE AND I WE GOT INTO A FIGHT. BUT WHO IS THERE FOR A MAN LIKE ME TO TELL MY TROUBLES TO WHEN I'M LIVING ON THE BREADLINE?

EIGHTEEN TONS OF METAL AND A WAGON FULL OF GRIT IT CAN RUN YOUR LIFE AWAY

I never saw it coming when I least expected it As the lights turned to red, on the deadline carriageway

I sometimes wish I'd stayed in school and placed a better bet But folks like me aren't born for that we take what we can get. So now I take the council coin to spread the roads with salt It's a working man's life, it's the only life I've got

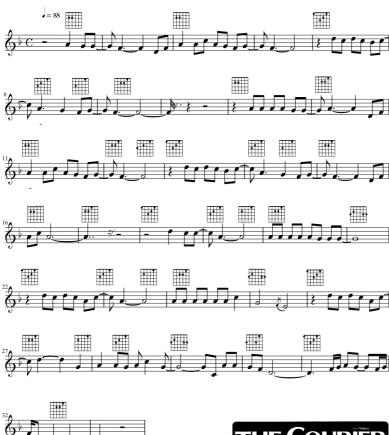
MR WADDELL SAID TO ME – "SON WE'LL HAVE TO LET YOU GO, THOSE PEOPLE COULD HAVE DIED THAT DAY OUT THERE IN THE SNOW" THERE'S A PRICE YOU PAY FOR LETTING ALL YOUR CONCENTRATION FAIL IT'S A P45 COMING IN THE MAIL.

THE COURIER TERROR AS GRITTER TEARS THROUGH RED LIGHT

WEDNESDAY 19TH FEB 2014

COPS AND ROBBERS

CAPO V STANDARD TUNING





LORD HAVE MERCY ON THIS FUGITIVE SOUL OF MINE I NEVER ASKED TO BE BORN INTO A LIFE OF CRIME. BUT LIKE MY FATHER BEFORE ME AND THE BABIES RATTLING ON THEIR BARS GENERATIONS OF 'CRIMEWATCH' SUPERSTARS, IN STOLEN CARS

Now here comes uncle Ian, he says he's got a little job tonight I NEVER STOP TO QUESTION IF IT'S WRONG OR RIGHT WE TAKE THE STUFF TO THE CITY, WE CAN RUN IT 'CROSS THE TAY BRIDGE AT DAWN.

WE KNOW PLENTY OF PLACES THAT WILL BUY OR PAWN, UNTIL IT'S GONE (AND NOW WE'RE PLAYING)

COPS AND ROBBERS, RUNNING THROUGH THE CITY AT NIGHT DISAPPEARING FACES THAT FLICKER IN THE FLASHING BLUE LIGHTS IT WAS BACK IN THE SCHOOL YARD WHERE WE FIRST LEARNED TO MAKE CRIME PAY

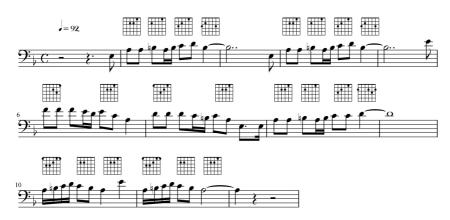
NOW COPS AND ROBBERS IS THE ONLY GAME WE PLAY

WEDNESDAY 19TH MARCH 2014

WELL I KNOW ONE THING FOR CERTAIN, WHEN THE PIGS THROW ME INTO A CELL, I'LL BE LIVING ON THE INSIDE BUT I'LL BE LIVING WELL AND WE'RE NOT SO VERY DIFFERENT, WE'RE JUST OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE WHEEL THEIR JOB IS TO CATCH ME - MY JOB IS TO STEAL, AND NOW THE GAME IS REAL (BUT STILL WE'RE PLAYING)

CARPENTERS TALE

STANDARD TUNING



Ben sharp's my name Ben Sharp I am I guide my chisel with a steady hand I heft my hammer and I flex my saw But now I wonder what I do it for I've lost my job in a court of law Working for the council man o' Working for the council man

I gave my graft three score and five I'm only 60 and I'm buried alive They threw me out on the rubbish tip They let me go when I lost my grip now I don't want to hear anymore of your lip Especially from a council man oh Especially from a council man

A MAN CAN WORK AND A MAN CAN CRY
AND IF HE BREAKS YOU CAN ASK HIM WHY
BUT IF THE ANSWER IS YEAR OFF SICK
THEY'LL BRUSH YOU AWAY LIKE A BROKEN OLD STICK
IT'S A BITTER CUP FOR A MAN TO SIP - WHEN HE'S
LAYING ON THE ON THE COLD HARD GROUND NO
LAYING ON THE COLD HARD GROUND

I'LL TAKE MY BOLSTER AND MY OLD STEEL BRACE AND
I'LL PUT THEM AWAY IN MY OLD TOOL CASE
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN WHAT TRIBUNALS SAY
THEY'VE GOT NO RIGHT TO TAKE MY JOB AWAY
AND IF I LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY I'LL
HAMMER DOWN THE COUNCIL MAN YES
I'LL HAMMER DOWN THAT COUNCIL MAN

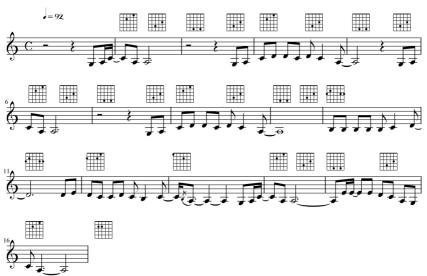
Ben Sharp I am, Ben Sharp's my name I honed my chisels and applied my plane I punched my hammer and I ripped my saw They took it all away in a court of law And I'll tell you who the hell I did it all for God damn it for that council man oh God damn it for that council man

THE COURTER BROUGHTY JOINER LOSES DISMISSAL CLAIM

Monday 19th May 2014

NUMBERS GAME

STANDARD TUNING



In the numbers game You are all the same In a gilded frame You don't have a name

When the man comes looking for a drone He can take his pick from all of the clones But you're not to blame You just did what you were told

IN THE HOLDING PEN
WHERE THE CHILDREN DREAM OF BETTER DAYS.
SAY THE LINES AGAIN
AS THEIR TROUBLED EYES BEGIN TO GLAZE

Aspirations hard to see when you don't know who you want to be In a changing world We still play the numbers game

Truth gets handed down from above Like a ruler in a fisted glove

Now you do the same Shut up and play the numbers game

- 1 Truth comes from authority
- 2 INTELLIGENCE IS THE ABILITY TO REMEMBER AND REPEAT
- 3 ACCURATE MEMORY AND REPETITION ARE REWARDED
- 4 CONFORM: SOCIALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY
- 5 Non compliance shall be punished

DUNDEE S4 EXAM RESULTS WORST IN SCOTLAND

Thursday 19th June 2014

POLICE 101

STANDARD TUNING





(VERSE

She was sitting in the shadow of a coloured parasol But when I came to fetch her she just wan't there at all. I could see the the children playing all along the esplanade And I had a sinking feeling as I stood there in the shade

(REFRAIN) POLICE 101 - CALL POLICE 101

By the time I made the phone call I could tell that she was gone Call the ambulance and coastguard 'cause there's something really wrong

Who else could have seen her at the Orchar nursing home? I was only gone five minutes now she's frightened and alone

(REFRAIN) POLICE 101 - CALL POLICE 101

SATURDAY 19TH JULY 2014

(BREAK)

A BLACK CAR STOPS AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD - IT'S HIM -

THANK GOD YOU CAME AT LAST, I'VE GOT EVERYTHING I NEED NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

(I'M NEVER GOING BACK, I'M GONNA LEAVE IT ALL BEHIND, YOU KNOW I JUST COULDN'T TELL HIM)

LEE PLEASE REMEMBER

CAPO V DADGBE



LEE YOU GOT US SO WORRIED
TAKING OFF IN THE DARKNESS ALONE
NOW YOUR CHILDREN ARE CRYING
BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE COMING HOME
IT'S BEEN 12 HOURS AND COUNTING
SINCE THEY SAW YOU IN THE HILLTOWN LAST NIGHT
PAPERS SAY IT'S NOT LIKE YOU
TO WANDER OFF AND DROP OUT OF SIGHT

LEE PLEASE REMEMBER WHEN THE SPIRIT TAKES YOUR BODY TO ROAM WILL YOU GIVE US SOME KIND OF A WARNING YOU'RE LEAVING HOME?

Out there in the edgelands where the loneliness chases you down Once the darkness lets go of you will you find the strength to turn it around?

LEE PLEASE REMEMBER WHEN THE SPIRIT TAKES YOUR BODY TO ROAM, WILL YOU GIVE US SOME KIND WARNING YOU'RE LEAVING HOME?

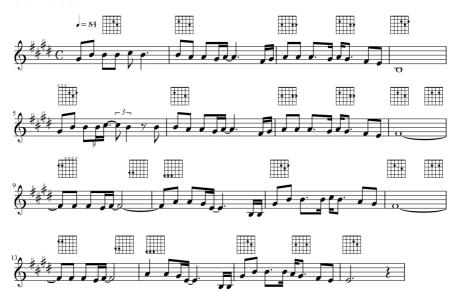
LEE PLEASE REMEMBER
WHEN YOUR DEMONS CALL YOU INTO THE NIGHT
WE'LL BE SITTING HERE WAITING AND PRAYING
THAT YOU'LL COME HOME ALRIGHT

FAMILY HEARTACHE OVER MISSING MAN

Tuesday August 19th 2014

THAT SHIP HAS SAILED

CAPO III DADGBE



Once we had a feeling that a dream was coming true
We saw the light and then we heard the sound
But the vision cracked and shattered to a million grains of sand
Slipping through our fingers to the ground

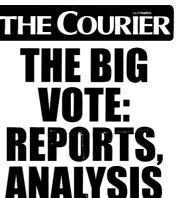
That ship has sailed, that ship has sailed And it took a precious cargo on that day Over the seas and into the blue And they sold us down the river on the way

Choices made by dreamers, choices made through fear Choices made from lies and hollow words And if you choose not to decide you still have made a choice Worst of all is choosing not to hear

That ship has sailed, that ship has sailed And it took a precious cargo on that day Into the blue, never to return And they sold us down the river on the way

When one day our children grow and see the world anew They'll build a land from lessons sorely learned And with their hearts united they'll have a clearer view And they'll find the strength to rise again

THAT SHIP WILL SAIL IN FROM THE BLUE GLIDING OVER THE HORIZON OUT AT SEA SHE'S COMING HOME WITH THE WIND IN HER SAILS AND WHEN THAT SHIP COMES IN WE SHALL BE FREE (REPEAT)



FRIDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2014

THEY'RE MAKING MONEY OUT OF PLANT FOOD TODAY

IT'S A MEDICAL MATTER
STOP THAT LEGALISING PATTER
THEY'RE MAKING MONEY OUT OF PLANT FOOD TODAY

IT'S ALL THE RAGE
ON YOUR LOCAL FRONT PAGE
THE EQUATIONS ARE TOO DULL
PLEASE LET US PLAY

CAN'T CONTROL THE STRENGTH, SHIFT THE MOLECULES AND COMBINE LET'S HAVE A PUFF......WE CAN MOVE BACKWARDS IN TIME HEXAGONS THE FAVOURITE SHAPE, I CAN'T REMEMBER WHY NO SIR IT WASN'T ME, I CANNOT TELL A LIE

WE SMOKE IN THE WOODS THE CHEMISTRY LAB'S CLOSED IRONICALLY OUR SCHOOL IS CALLED THE GROVE

MAGICAL MUSHROOMS AND BIG CRUMBLY SPLIFFS FOR THE BRAVEST AND THE BOLDEST, AN 8HR TRIP FIGHTING AND THIEVING BREAKING AND ENTERING LINED UP AND TALKED DOWN TO DISMISSED AS A FOOL

IT USED TO BE EX PUPILS
OR MATES OF A MATE
THE DOPE WAS UNKNOWABLE, BUT, IT'S TRUE TO SAY
THE ACID OR SHROOMS COULD GO EITHER WAY

BUT GENERALLY THEY WOULDN'T KILL YOU ALTHOUGH PSYCHOSIS WAS AN OPTION IT WOULDN'T FUCK UP YOUR CIRCULATION OR DESTROY A MAJOR ORGAN

WARNING AFTER BROUGHTY PUPIL'S COLLAPSE

WEDNESDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2014

BUT THOSE WERE THE INNOCENT LOCALISED ECONOMIES
BEFORE THE INTERNET, GLOBALISATION AND BLACK MARKET LABORATORIES
AND YOUNG MEN WILL TRY AND INCREASE THEIR PRESENT DANCER
CAUSE THE TESTOSTERONES DOING ODD THINGS TO THEIR GENERAL BEHAVIOUR
A, B OR EVEN C, THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYS SCIENTISTS AND SACKS THEM WHEN THEY'RE FREE
WITH THEIR OPINIONS, BACKED UP BY THE SCIENCE
THAT THE POWERS THAT BE. USE AS A FICTITIOUS LICENCE

THAT OUR DRUG POLICY IS A HEALTHY POLICY

IT'S A CHAOTIC RESPONSE TO A PARTICULAR ENTERTAINMENT.
NOW ALL CULTURES IN TIME LIKE TO GET OFF THEIR HEADS
INTEGRAL TO OUR SPECIES, LIKE BREWING BEER AND MAKING BREAD
IF YOU CRIMINALISE AND RESTRAIN IT, CONFUSE AND DEMONISE IT
THE MARKET WILL MOVE IN AND PRETTY MUCH REORGANISE IT
AND PROFITS WILL KEEP GROWING WITH NO STANDARDISED PRODUCT
AND NATIONAL BARRIERS WILL BE CONVENIENTLY OVERLOOKED
AND SCHOOL KIDS WILL BE SCHOOL KIDS
CALISE THAT'S WHAT THEY ARE

IT'S A MEDICAL MATTER
STOP THAT LEGALISING PATTER
THEY'RE MAKING MONEY OUT OF PLANT FOOD TODAY

IT'S ALL THE RAGE
ON YOUR LOCAL FRONT PAGE
THE EQUATIONS ARE TOO DULL
PLEASE LET US PLAY

NOT THE ONLY ONE

CAPO II DADF#AD



Talk about you dirty secrets
Talk about the fear and shame
They make it sound like you're the problem
Making out that somehow you're the one to blame

Down in the darkest shadows Hidden from the sun Where every city keeps it's secrets You're not the only one

You're looking for a new direction Fixing up the waterfront and (not forgetting) the V & A They try to say you don't deserve it Make it sound like you're not worth it - anyway.

You rise from the rusting ruins
REACHING FOR THE SUN
WELL EVERY CITY'S GOT IT'S PROBLEMS
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE
EVERY CITY'S GOT ITS SECRETS
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE
YEAH EVERYBODY'S GOT THEIR PROBLEMS
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE



FRIDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2014

Victoria

STANDARD TUNING - FINGER PICKED



Victoria, I hope you don't mind that I put you in this song Now you're here, ain't it good to know There's someplace you belong?

Standing there by the water side With the treasure that you keep inside

VICTORIA, YOU LOOK SO BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT

And I like your style but I know there's those Who want to put you down But in a little while, you are going to be The best loved girl in town

TAKE MY HAND DARLIN', COME WITH ME 'CAUSE THAT OLD ALBERT GUY'S JUST HISTORY

VICTORIA, YOU LOOK SO BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT

You look so pretty sitting by the sea Now you're exactly where you're meant to be I can't help feeling this was destiny

VICTORIA, YOU LOOK SO BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT, YES YOU DO

VICTORIA, YOU LOOK SO BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT

GOVT OFFERS EXTRA £10M TO V&A PROJECT

Monday 19th January 2015

THE BACKSTORY

In an age where the streaming playlist has supplanted the album and where the physical format has all but receded into the cloud it may seem like an odd idea to produce a songbook, but the discovery of an old songbook belonging to my great grandfather brought the realization, that of all the formats dedicated to capturing music, paper and ink still has the greatest longevity. Next to oral transmission, the songbook remains a portable and durable method of preserving and communicating songs, it stands apart from a recording, it requires no technology to be read. Whereas a musical recording preserves only one version of a song forever immutable – a songbook provides the DNA, the raw data by which it can be re-animated at any time and place by anyone or any group of players. All you need is some rudimentary knowledge of how to read the dots. This is important, especially in a time where the sheer ubiquity of recorded music has caused the song to become almost completely decontextualised and in many ways relegated to the real mode of audio wallpaper.

MUSICAL MANUSCRIPT PROVIDES A VEHICLE BY WHICH SONGS CAN BE REPLAYED AND (MOST IMPORTANTLY) RE-INTERPRETED IN ANY GIVEN SITUATION. PLAYED IN THIS WAY A SONG CAN EMERGE FROM THE PAGE IN A NEW AND INDIVIDUAL FORM, CHARACTERISED BY THE UNIQUE QUALITIES OF THE PLAYERS, THE INSTRUMENTS AND THE SITUATION OR LOCATION IN WHICH IT IS PLAYED - IT BECOMES THE SYMBIOSIS OF ALL OF THE ABOVE, IN THIS CONTEXT IT CAN RECLAIM SOME OF ITS MEANING AND HONOUR A SENSE OF OCCASION AND PLACE.

I LIKE TO IMAGINE THAT SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE WHEN ALL RECORDING FORMATS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED TECHNOLOGIES HAVE BECOME REDUNDANT EXCEPT AS MUSEUM PIECES OR CURIOSITIES IN THE DOMAIN OF ENTHUSIASTS, WHEN THE CLOUD HAS CEASED TO EXIST AND TAKEN ALL OUR DIGITISED MEMORIES WITH IT, THAT SOMEONE WILL FIND A DUSTY MANUSCRIPT AND BE ABLE TO HEAR THE MUSIC AGAIN, AS A LIVING TIME-BASED ART FORM, EXISTING ONLY IN THE MOMENT OF ITS PLAYING.

ABOUT THIS SONGBOOK

The songs in this book represent interpretations of one years worth of local headline stories as presented in the Dundee Courier newspaper. Headline stories appearing on the hoardings on the 19th day of every month were used as the source material for the songs and as such the collection represents a contextualised group of works rooted in the local Dundee area. Although the songs contain references to real events and people, they are fictionalised versions of the facts as they were portrayed, hence the title 'Backstories'. The songs try to imagine what may or may not have actually happened as contributing factors behind the evolution of the headline stories. The real truth may never be known, but perhaps some of the local events of 2014 will be remembered in this mythologised form - which would be very much in keeping with the folk song tradition.

CREDITS

ALL SONGS WRITTEN BY EMIL THOMPSON EXCEPT **THEY'RE MAKING MONEY OUT OF PLANT FOOD** BY MICHAEL MALLETT AND MARK HUNTER.

HUGE THANKS are due for additional instrumental and vocal collaborations by Mark Hunter, Andy Spiller and Michael Mallet who helped me make some recorded examples of these songs using no more than a tiny 4-track recorder the size of a cigarette packet that we passed around between ourselves.

THEY ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE:

HTTP://SONG-BOOK.BANDCAMP.COM/