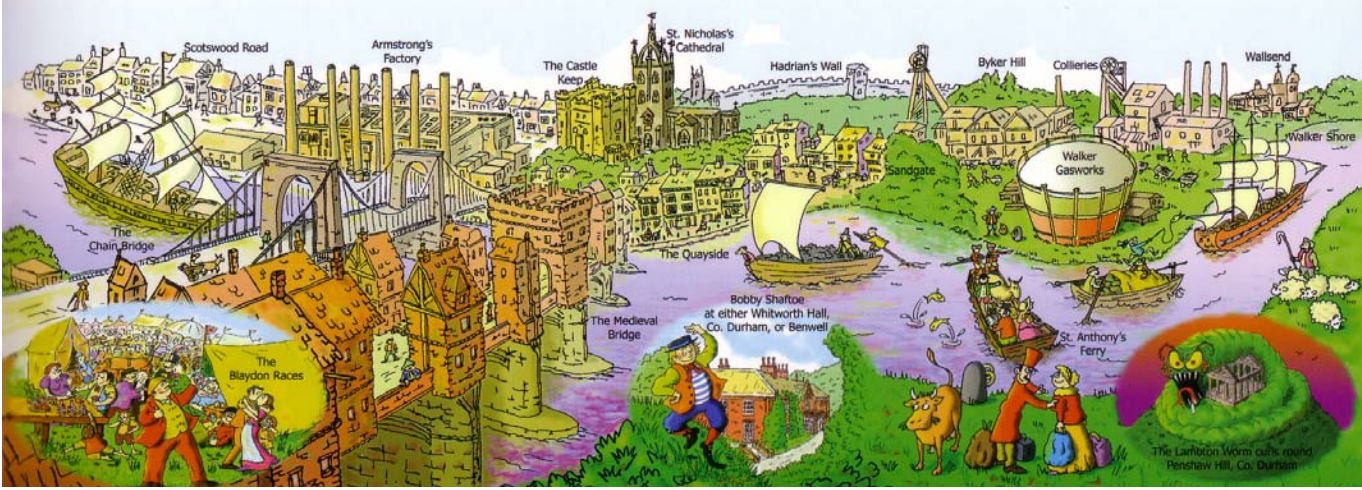




# WOR GEORDIE TOP TEN

Ten of the best Geordie songs  
Chosen, researched, recorded and celebrated  
by the West Walker Communities



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### **Introduction**

This book is a celebration of a community working together. The project has involved groups centred around West Walker. The songs have meaning and excitement for us because we have worked on them together. Before beginning this project we had no idea how many brilliant Geordie songs there were. "You've got the best song writing tradition in England", we were told, but we didn't really believe that until we had to choose our Top 10. What a job we had deciding which songs to leave out!

This is our final choice, not necessarily because they're the best songs (everybody's choice would be different!) but because, between them they reflect the history of the region and in particular our own neighbourhood, Walker. They also appeal to all ages.

Believe it or not, there were once fields in Walker and we

like to think the locals would sing "Ca'Hawkie" as they brought the cows in for milking.

Seafaring is still in the blood of many Geordies and no other songs in the English language reflect that better than "Bobby Shaftoe" or "When the Boat Comes in".

But, coal was what made the north east important in the eyes of the world and gave birth to its most famous song "The Keel Row". Here in the east end of Newcastle our ancestors invented and sang our local anthem "Byker Hill and Walker Shore, Collier Lads for Ever More".

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the industrial masses wanted to be entertained and would cram into music halls such as Balmbra's to listen to professional entertainers such as Geordie Ridley and Joe Wilson who wrote and performed songs like "The Blaydon Races" and "Keep Your Feet Still Geordie Henny". They might even have gone to a pantomime called "The

Lambton Worm" based on an old medieval legend.

Throughout all this, the grand old River Tyne - the greatest symbol of the north east - kept on flowing, just a few hundred yards from our doorsteps in Walker. No collection of Geordie songs chosen by us would therefore be complete without "Water of Tyne".

Enjoy the songs - sing them together and while you're doing this you'll be doing your bit to preserve our wonderful Geordie heritage.

### **Acknowledgements**

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