

ALAN REID & ROB VAN SANTE – ROUGH DIAMONDS

SONG LYRICS AND TRACK NOTES

ROUGH DIAMONDS (*Alan Reid - PRS Music*)

A song looking back at the once thriving Lothian coal industry in the east of Scotland. Various pit names are mentioned as well as the 'Nancy Teuch', a local public pathway that was favoured by leisure walkers and, it would seem, courting couples, given that there are several 'kissing gates'.

PASSING PLACES (*John Conolly – PRS Music*)

Those of you who are familiar with single track roads in the Highlands of Scotland will know of the 'passing places' every few hundred yards that allow vehicles to pull over so that vehicles travelling in the opposite direction can pass unhindered. With practice it is possible to minimise deceleration by judging when the vehicle coming towards you will reach the passing place at the same time as you (a kind of Highland sport). Veteran prolific songwriter John Conolly (of 'Fiddler's Green' fame) penned this song about his visit to the island of Mull to explore his roots in which he cleverly uses 'passing places' as a double entendre.

BARRELS OF GOLD (*Alan Reid – PRS Music*)

The town of Wick in the far north of Scotland accrued its 'silver and gold' in the nineteenth century from the herring industry and from whisky distilling. The herring, known as the 'silver darlings' (also the title of a novel by Highland writer Neil Gunn) are much declined but the local 'Old Pulteney' distillery still thrives, sending out its 'barrels of gold'.

ALBERT BERRY (*Ted Edwards. - Arr. Reid/ van Sante - PRS Music*)

Written by ex-coal miner Ted Edwards. This is our interpretation of his imaginative piece whereby a miner has a dialogue with coal, which is personified into a being that seeks to thwart.

CARRADALE (*Alan Reid - PRS Music*)

Carradale is a charming village on the east side of the Mull of Kintyre, facing the west coast of the island of Arran. This song lists some of the places you might pass on the way from Glasgow to Carradale. The Cobbler is a hill, which stands above the village of Arrochar at the head of Loch Long. It resembles a cobbler wielding his hammer. Shortly after, the road winds up a long glen. It's known as the 'Rest and be Thankful' with an appropriate car park at the top to take in the view down the glen. The song relates a journey from the big city whereby cares and stress melt away.

MAD MAGGIE MURCHIESON (a tale) (*Alan Reid - PRS Music*)

Bogles and Brownies are wee devils, famed and feared in Scottish folklore. In this tale of a chance human encounter in an imagined place in Scotland there is a hectic dash for safety, reminiscent of a very famous Scottish poem.

ROSLIN CASTLE (*Trad. Arr. Reid/van Sante - PRS Music*)

An evocative air, one of many composed by the eighteenth century Scots composer James Oswald. Students of Robert Burns will note that a phrase in the tune also occurs in his song 'The Slave's Lament'.

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THE LAST TRIP HOME (*Davy Steele - PRS Music*)

A song about the passing of the magnificent Clydesdale work horse from farm life, written by two of our former colleagues. John McCusker composed the melody of the chorus while the rest of the song was written by our late, lamented and much missed bandmate Davy Steele.

THE ORCADIAN (John Rae) (*Alan Reid - PRS Music*)

John Rae was Orkney born, and like many of his fellow islanders, went to Canada to be employed by the Hudson's Bay Company. He worked as a doctor and explorer, living among the native Inuit, learning their ways and earning their respect. He was well placed, therefore, to help in the search for the Lord Franklin expedition, which had become lost while searching for the elusive North West Passage. Learning from the Inuit that the expedition had split into several groups after two winters ice bound in Hudson Bay Rae reported to the Royal Society in London that there was evidence that men driven mad (from starvation, snow blindness and probably lead poisoning from canned food) had resorted to cannibalism. His evidence was ridiculed and a campaign, led by Lady Franklin and aided by Charles Dickens, to discredit Rae resulted in him being ostracised by the British establishment. It's only recently that there have been moves to restore his reputation and recognise his achievements in exploring the North West Passage.

FAREWELL TO THE GOLD (*Paul Metsers - Topic Publishing*)

From the pen of Paul Metsers comes a tale of the catastrophic flash flood that took place in 1863 in the south island of New Zealand and which took the lives of scores of gold miners.

MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED, RED, ROSE (*Trad. Arr. Reid/van Sante - PRS Music*)

Robert Burns' timeless love song set to an alternative tune, one which the poet was well acquainted with. This song is a favourite in our live performances.

THE ROUT OF THE BLUES (*Trad. Arr. Reid/van Sante - PRS Music*)

Made famous by the excellent brother duo of Robin and Barry Dransfield in the 1970s this is our take on a very English folk song.

PERSONNEL

ALAN REID: *vocals, piano, keyboard, accordion, guitar*

ROB van SANTE: *vocals, guitars, assorted percussion, drums, bass, ukulele, keyboards*

JOHN MARTIN: *octave fiddle, cello*

STEWART FORBES: *tenor sax*

PRODUCED BY

ALAN & ROB van SANTE

ENGINEERED, MIXED AND MASTERED

ROB van SANTE at *RVS Music Productions, Leeds, UK (and on location in Edinburgh and Glasgow)*

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