

PARODISTS



ON PARADE

**The
art of
versified parody**

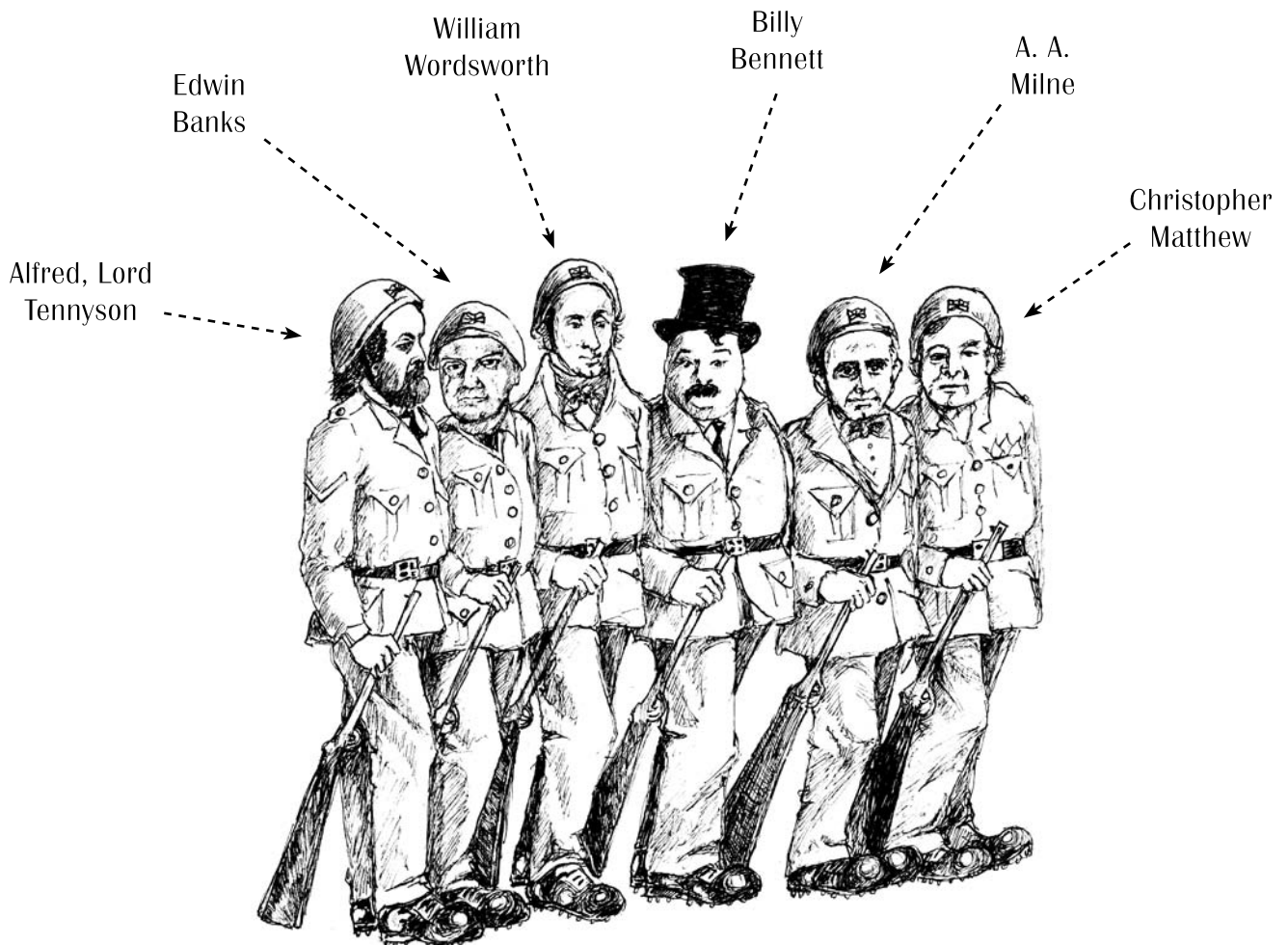
**Compiled by
Edwin Banks**

PARODISTS ON PARADE

The art of versified parody

Compiled by Edwin Banks

featuring all these poets and parodists, and more...



Cover design by Ian Roebuck

Contents

Compiler's preface to Parodists On Parade . . . . .	. 1
Sources and Acknowledgements. . . . . .	. 2
Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes . . . . .	. 3
Sing a Song of Sixpence . . . . .	. 3
<i>Parody 1</i> by Edwin Banks. . . . .	. 3
Sing a Song of Parody . . . . .	. 3
<i>Parody 2</i> by Rhoda Tuck Pook . . . . .	. 3
Sing a Song of Sixpence in the style of John Milton . . . . .	. 3
Rock-a-bye Baby . . . . .	. 4
<i>Parody 1</i> by Rhoda Tuck Pook . . . . .	. 4
Rock-a-bye Baby in the style of Alexander Pope. . . . .	. 4
<i>Parody 2</i> by Edwin Banks . . . . .	. 4
Rock-a-bye Baby . . . . .	. 4
Little Bo-Peep . . . . .	. 5
<i>Parody</i> by Edwin Banks . . . . .	. 5
Little Bo-Peep. . . . .	. 5
Girls and Boys Come Out to Play . . . . .	. 6
<i>Parody</i> by Hilary (1999) . . . . .	. 6
in the style of Sir John Betjeman. . . . .	. 6
<i>Tailpiece</i> by Edwin Banks . . . . .	. 6
Girls and Boys. . . . .	. 6
Old King Cole . . . . .	. 7
<i>Parodies</i> by G. K. Chesterton . . . . .	. 8
Parody 1 in the style of Tennyson. . . . .	. 8
Parody 2 in the style of W. B. Yeats . . . . .	. 9
Parody 3 in the style of Robert Browning . . . . .	. 9
Parody 4 in the style of Walt Whitman . . . . .	. 10
Parody 5 in the style of Swinburne . . . . .	. 10
Salad (1872). . . . .	. 11
Mortimer Collins (1827-76), in the style of three poets	
Variant 1 in the style of Tennyson . . . . .	. 11
Variant 2 in the style of Swinburne . . . . .	. 11
Variant 3 in the style of Browning . . . . .	. 11

PARODISTS ON PARADE

THE ART OF VERSIFIED PARODY
COMPILED BY EDWIN BANKS

Sir John Betjeman (1906-84)

Lenten Thoughts of a High Anglican

Original

(This is about a lady I see on Sunday mornings in a London church - JB)

Isn't she lovely, 'The Mistress'?
With her wide-apart grey-green eyes,
The droop of her lips and, when she smiles,
Her glance of amused surprise?

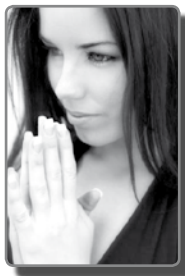
How nonchalantly she wears her clothes,
How expensive they are as well!
And the sound of her voice is as soft and deep
As the Christ Church tenor bell.

But why do I call her 'The Mistress'
Who knows not her way of life?
Because she has more of a cared-for air
Than many a legal wife.

How elegantly she swings along
In the vapoury incense veil;
The angel choir must pause in song
When she kneels at the altar rail.

The parson said that we shouldn't stare
Around when we come to church,
Or the unknown God we are seeking
May forever elude our search.

But I hope the preacher will not think
It unorthodox and odd
If I add that I glimpse in 'The Mistress'
A hint of the unknown God.



Parody by Christopher Matthew

Lady Golfer

Isn't she gorgeous, the Golfer?
With her smoothly tanned, long, long legs,
And the flash of her waist every time that she swings,
Or bends down to pick up her pegs?

How nonchalantly she takes the club,
How lazy her follow-through!
Sad men rediscover the love of their youth,
And mentally scrawl billets-doux.

But she never sees the sly glances
They steal as she heads for the first,
For she is the new ladies' champion,
And a five-handicapper at worst.

She triumphs in mixed competitions,
And sets an unbeatable pace,
As men find they lose concentration –
Not to mention the grin from their face.

But few ever mind being beaten
By a woman they'd all love to date;
For an hour or two in her presence
Is enough to make all men feel great.



Business Girls (from A Few Late Chrysanthemums, 1954)

Original

From the geyser ventilators
Autumn winds are blowing down
On a thousand business women
Having baths in Camden Town.

Waste pipes chuckle into runnels,
Steam's escaping here and there,
Morning trains through Camden Cutting
Shake the Crescent and the Square

Early nip of changeful autumn,
Dahlias glimpsed through garden doors,
At the back precarious bathrooms
Jutting out from upper floors.

And behind their frail partitions
Business women lie and soak,
Seeing through the draughty skylight
Flying clouds and railway smoke.

Rest you there, poor unbelov'd ones,
Lap your loneliness in heat.
All too soon the tiny breakfast,
Trolley-bus and windy street!

Parody 1 by Christopher Matthew

Widows

Soothing sounds of daytime telly,
Ticking clocks and hourly chimes
Haunt ten thousand golfing widows
Thumbing through their 'Radio Times'.

Everything is done and dusted
Dinner wrapped in cellophane,
Dishcloths washed and flowery cushions
Plumped up on the counterpane.

"Sure you'll be okay, then, darling?"
Why they bother no-one knows,
"I could cancel if you'd rather"
I could punch you on the nose.

Novels by Joanna Trollope,
Bubble baths at half past three,
Gins and tonics sipped, abandoned,
Cupsa soup and mugsa tea.

Phone calls halfway through Eastenders:
'Be bit late, love; don't wait dins,'
Cheese on toast and woolly slippers,
Unwrapped dinners dumped in bins.



Parody 2 by Alan Bennett

Place Names of China

Bolding Vedas! Shanks New Nisa!
Trusty Lichfield swirls it down
To filter Beds on Ruislip Marshes
From my loo in Kentish Town.

The Burlington! The Rochester!
Oh those names of childhood loos –
Nursie knocking at the door
'Have you done your number twos?'

Lady typist – office party –
Golly! All that gassy beer!
Tripping home down Hendon Parkway
To her improved Windermere.

Chelsea Buns and lounge bar pasties
All swilled down with Benskin's Pale,
Purified and cleansed by charcoal,
Fill the taps in Colindale.

Here I sit, alone and sixty,
Bald, and fat, and full of sin,
Cold the seat and loud the cistern,
As I read the Harpic tin.



PARODISTS ON PARADE


The art of versified parody

Compiled by Edwin Banks



© Edwin Banks
21 Debenham Road
Stretford, Manchester
M32 9DG
0161 865 4595

Designed by

Tony		
Kershaw		
	Information	
	Design	

01457 765350