

Transcript of Connecting West Midlands Communities with Linguistic Heritage

Title: [Connecting West Midlands communities with linguistic heritage \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=HL_HBg6LiHI\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=HL_HBg6LiHI)

Duration: 10:51

When that child was forth brought Little they had or right nought To lay him in, that bairn But a little hay or fern. They swaddled him with what they could get And lay him where the farm beasts ate. They lay him in the beasts' stalls Enclosed between two old walls. Then was fulfilled the prophecy old That Isaiah had foretold The ox and the ass had knowledge Of their lord in their stable.

When that child was forth brought Little they had or right nought To lay him in, that bairn But a little hay or fern. They swaddled him with what they could get And lay him where the farm beasts ate. They lay him in the beasts' stalls Enclosed between two old walls. Then was fulfilled the prophecy old That Isaiah had foretold The ox and the ass had knowledge Of their lord in their stable. And Habakkuk has also said Between two beasts he should be laid. So it befell that likewise tidings Were taken to the countryside To shepherds, awake in a field, Their beasts and their sheep to feed.

I sauh a Tour on a Toft wonderliche I maket.

With deop dich and derk (2) And dredful of siht. A Feir feld ful of folk fond I ther bi twene. Of alle maner of men the mene and the riche.

Of alle maner of men the mene and the riche. Worchinge and wondringe as the world asketh Summe putten hem to the plough. and pleiden hem ful seldene. In Eringe And in Sowynge swonken ful harde.

that monie of theos wasturs . In Glotonye distruen. To preyere And to penaunce putten heom money.

A somer sesun whon softe was the sonne. I schop me in to a schroud . A scheep as I were. In habite of an hermite un holy of werkes. Wende I wydene in this world wondres to here.

A somer sesun whon softe was the sonne. I schop me in to a schroud . A scheep as I were. In habite of an hermite un holy of werkes. Wende I wydene in this world wondres to here. Bote in a Mayes Morwynge on Maluerne hulles. Me bi fel a ferly. A Feyrie me thouhte. I was weori of wandringe And wente me to reste. Undur a brod banke bi A Bourne syde

And as I lay and leonede And lokede on the watres. I slumberde in A slepyng hit sownede so murie.

What it's telling you about is sleeping about a canal as it we call it today - a brook. Thinking about what he's going to be doing. Some of the people have been put to work and earning themselves a few bob and he's one of the folks who's sitting wondering why they're putting themselves to working so hard.

And some of them 'scattering and sowing they strived hard and worked for what wasters with gluttony destroy'.

So he's trying to say there that he's working hard to earn a few bob and you've got the other people who are just getting a few bob and wasting it! Doing nothing with it, probably spending it on the beer.

Well, he's just an ordinary chappy. It looks like he's a shepherd or something, decides to go and have a day on his own, wandering about to have a think. He wandered up the Malverns and thought he'd have a rest by a stream. Fell asleep and had a dream. And his dream seemed to summarise what he thought his place was in the world and what the world was. The difference between the rich and the poor. He did nothing, him and his like, did nothing but work, handed over the money and the rich just wasted it, drunk it and ate it. But that was his role in life and he did it because he thought it was right.

It's really strange. The more you're going through it, the more you can hear in yourself the Black Country accent coming through. I don't think I've got a particularly strong, the odd twang, but when you read it you can hear that same lilt, that same tone and the more you read the worse it gets! It's really quite disturbing, thinking 'I don't think I sound like that!', but you can really hear it coming through, which I find really strange.

I have to say I'm surprised, if you'd have said to me before I read that, when I first looked at it I thought I wouldn't be able to read it at all. But as I read through there was a number of words that did actually become quite familiar and I did recognise parts of the word, all of the word, not all of them but a lot of the words. So I could understand some of it. Some of it I didn't. Some of it I could see, you know it was the way I was speaking as well, but it fitted in quite well with the words. So I didn't find it as hard as I thought I was going to when I initially looked at it and I did cover it up so I didn't cheat at all when I was reading it so that's quite good!

Some of them, some of the words, if you hear my grandad, he's still got half of those and he'd probably write the same as that as well.

'they' is spelled 'heo' which I found quite surprising, the omission of the t. There's more similarities than I expected really.

It will benefit people because it's dying out anyway, it will be to keep the thing alive. You'll learn this and keep the thing going because we'll lose it. It's like heritage, it's like history disappearing, you need to preserve this thing to teach the kids and to, you know, it's important that we keep this sort of thing.

I've never heard of it and I'd love to see it, seriously I would. It's like the geezer who found the Staffordshire Hoard. That interested people and this is the same thing. Something that relates to the Midlands, what we ought to be seeing.

It would also make a lot more museum pieces far more interesting, far more readable because the bits that you do see, even though they're in Middle English, you can't read them fully and understand them fully, so they're always going to end up in collections but packed away so it's best to see them on display, translated.

It should be researched, put on display and I think the local people would love it, they really would love it because people are interested in their history and stuff like that.

I think also there's a lot of people who are interested in things like this. If you think of the Staffordshire Hoard, the amount of people who've been interested. Things created locally, I think all sorts of people would look.

Personally, I have to say that because people from the West Midlands are a bit ashamed of their accent and that you think that it's frowned upon, it's not seen as a posh accent, that if you have something like that to show you that it actually was 600 years ago that people were talking like this, that it's not something that's grown up in the last hundred years. I think it would give people a sense of being proud of our accent and the fact that we're a little bit Black Country, a little bit Midlandy so I think it would be really interesting.

I think it's very important because it puts it into a perspective really. A lot of sort of know what's happened a couple of hundred years ago and that sort of thing, but then when you go beyond that it soon becomes more and more sketchy. You sort of then have to go into more generalised history books, so to have something that really is really local, I think is very important to hear.

The people that I mix with it would chuff them to death, or chuff them to jeff as we say, to know that the heritage around us is not only in the castle and the priories and the churches, it's in us. We are a continuation and I shouldn't say it but it's nice to feel part of the land.

[Privacy](#) | [Legal](#) | [Cookies and cookie policy](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Site map](#) | [Website feedback](#) | [Charitable information](#)

© University of Birmingham 2015

