



# SHEFFIELD LAKELAND SONG CYCLE

Produced by Soundpost in  
association with  
Sheffield Lakeland  
Landscape Partnership



# RE-SOUND

The Re:Sound Project, presented by Soundpost in association with the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership, was created to reinvigorate, re-establish and revoice vital elements of the local cultural heritage of the Sheffield Lakeland communities: the distinctive carol tradition of the local area; stories and songs of the land and water; lost traditions and site-specific work.

Part of the realisation of the project was to commission a song cycle from local musicians to explore and celebrate these stories and traditions. In May 2022, as part of a public Soundpost event held in Dungworth to celebrate the project, Nancy Kerr, Rowan Rheingans, Sean Cooney, Rowan Piggott and Cath Carr ran a series of free workshops and walks in the Lakeland area and delivered the inaugural performance of the complete song cycle. As you can see on the following pages their songs cover diverse topics: the positive effect of the water management of the area on the flora and fauna; histories and stories from the Great Sheffield Flood of 1864; the emotional responses of swimmers and rowers to their interaction with nature; the broad sense in which landscape and community come together to create 'home'.

This book contains the music and lyrics for each song. Together they create a free resource that's available for everyone, as the first part of the legacy of the Song Cycle project. The other part of that legacy is the accompanying film of the Song Cycle, filmed at the first event and available to [view here](#).

**Soundpost** is a Sheffield based, artist led organisation that coordinates a range of participatory events exploring folk traditions through practical workshops, performances, debate and discussion.

The Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership aims to manage and promote the landscape and cultural heritage of the Sheffield Lakeland and is funded by the [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#).



## Sean Cooney

### Rollo

When I read a book on the Great Sheffield Flood of 1864 the enormity of the story soon hit me. The 11th March, 2 minutes before midnight, the collapse of the Dale Dyke Dam, millions of gallons of water thundering down the Loxley, taking out buildings, foundries lifted from the foundations, joining the Don and going all the way to Rotherham and within an hour the loss of at least 240 souls, perhaps as many as 300. It's incredibly well documented with so many first-hand accounts, people saying it was like the end of the world, people had no idea what was happening.

I stepped back from the enormity of all that and the personal connections to all that because descendants of the flood victims are still amongst us and still lay flowers at the memorial every year. I started looking for the heroes, for the helpers and I've written a song about a dog.

The Legend of Rollo the Dog.

There's no actual historical evidence to show that Rollo did this heroic deed but I'm going to argue that he did. A collar exists, a gold collar with his name and the date inscribed. Rollo was a real dog and he belonged to someone who worked at the Philadelphia Steel Works and the story is that he saved a baby from the flood.

A couple of years ago in the archives at Shoreham Street they found a picture, like a Victorian postcard, a piece of disaster tourism, with a picture of a Border Collie pulling a baby in a basket to safety and it lead me on quite a journey to look at some of the famous dogs of history; the first dog in space, Laika; the famous German Shepherd dog of Hollywood in the 1920's, Rin Tin Tin; Barry the St. Bernard from Bern who saved dozens of people in the Alps; Buddy, the first ever guide dog; Soter, the dog who saved Corinth from the Persians; Swansea Jack, the Welsh dog who saved over 30 lives in Swansea harbour in the 1930's. Some of them make their way into my song about Rollo.

# Rollo

Sean Cooney  
Transcribed by Rowan Piggott

Well you've heard a-bout them won - der dogs all fit to raise a smile, Like

5

dogs who've found their own way home and walked a thou-sand miles, Or

9

dogs who held their heads in war and dogs all wrapped in grace, And

13

dogs who've been on sub - ma-rines and dogs who've been to space. Here's

17

to the hounds of Hol - ly-wood who've done a fan - cy bit, To

21

all those dogs who've done nowt much but eat and drink and shit, But

25

here's a litt - le dit - ty for a dog gie long a - go, His

29

mas - ter called him 'Roll - o' and his sto - ry you should know...

You've heard about them wonder dogs all fit to raise a smile  
Like dogs who've found their own way home and walked a thousand miles  
Or dogs who held their heads in war and dog's all wrapped in grace  
Dogs who've been on submarines and dogs who've been to space  
Here's to the hounds of Hollywood who've done a fancy bit  
And to all those dogs who've done nowt much but eat and sleep and shit  
But here's a little ditty for a doggie long ago  
His master called him 'Rollo' and his story you should know

Was the saddest night in Sheffield was in 1864  
Dale Dike Dam collapsed and water thundered down below  
Near 300 souls were lost beneath a hungry tide  
And foundries, houses, bridges, barns were swiftly swept aside  
Now Rollo he was sleeping fast by Philadelphia gate  
As Gunson's gig came rattling past the hour was getting late  
Two minutes to midnight he was wakened from his dream  
Was like the world was ending and the pigs began to scream

No derby horse could run as fast to raise a warning cry  
A Bradfield baby, one day old, would be the first to die  
Through Damflask down the Loxley then the water thundered on  
And Rollo sensed the danger so he headed to the Don  
He heard a baby cry out like a banshee in the night  
He dove into the filthy foam and swam with all his might  
His teeth grabbed on her basket and he pulled her to the shore  
While people gasped and people gaped upon the deed they saw

Was barely but an hour before the torrent had been spent  
Yet all the way to Rotherham the devastation went  
Subscription soon was raised that night to thank the faithful hound  
And a golden collar were inscribed, his name was shouted loud  
And though no record of his deed was ever written down  
Though there's no statue of him in the centre of the town  
Mary North, she swore with pride her parents told her right  
That she had been the baby that the dog had saved that night

150 years would pass until one dusty day  
In the archives there on Shoreham Street they found a hidden tray  
And a picture titled 'faithful friend' pulling for the shore  
'In memory of Great Sheffield Flood, 1864'  
On some celestial bow wow shore the tails are wagging wild  
Soter sits a smiling, Swansea Jack is at his side  
Laika, Buddy, Rin Tin Tin and all the motley crew  
And Rollo sits beside them, yes, and every word is true



## Rowan Piggott

### The Carol of the Flood

When I received the e-mail commissioning me to write this song I was just about to go out on a walk with my dog and my 2 year old. We walk all around the Sheffield Lakeland because we live on that side of Sheffield and on that walk the song began writing itself almost immediately.

In its broadest sense it's about man's relationship with nature. In this area we divided up the landscape with the water, the tributaries, the rivers that we diverted for the steel industry, the cutler works, the water wheels and that changed the landscape. What really struck me when reading about the area is that these changes have done an immense amount of good. For once, our interference has unwittingly created all this biodiversity, all these little pockets where you find species that you don't find anywhere else. That was really beautiful to me and I wanted to try and capture that positive story about man's relationship with nature.

I read quite a boring document about flood management but found quite a lot of beauty in the way that the flood waters are being managed now and the way that nature and all these species are being treated with such respect. Hopefully that comes across in the song.

# The Carol of the Flood

Rowan Piggott  
Transcribed by Rowan Piggott

**Verse**

C G C F

From heath-ered ridge to pack-horse bridge the ri-ver springs her source, Through

5 C F G D

brook and tarn past old cruck barn she runs her crook-ed course, As

9 C G C F

stream-lets surge in cho-rus merge the wilds of stone and mud, Each

13 C F D G

beck and burn in whirl-pools churn the ca-rol of the flood... The

**Chorus**

17 Em D Cmaj7

ri-ver flows from moor and peak\_\_\_\_\_ In

21 Em D Cmaj7

tri-ckle, tor-rent, rill and\_\_\_\_\_ creek\_\_\_\_\_ Though man her

25 D G Em

route has wrought up-on\_\_\_\_\_ The

29 C D G

fish and fowl her wa-ters don\_\_\_\_\_

From heathered ridge  
To packhorse bridge  
The river springs her source  
Through brook and tarn  
Past old cruck barn  
She runs her crooked course

As streamlets surge  
In chorus, merge  
The wilds of stone and mud  
Each beck and burn  
In whirlpools churn  
The carol of the flood

*The river flows from moor and peak  
In trickle, torrent, rill and creek  
Though man her route has wrought upon  
The fish and fowl her waters don*

Down sleeping hill  
Through forge and mill  
Her waters drive the wheel  
Of nature's sloth  
And mankind's growth  
A city made of steel

This city's tale  
Has left its trail  
In weir and dam's release  
Each pass and dale  
Each oaky vale  
Holds reservoirs of peace

*The river flows from moor and peak  
In trickle, torrent, rill and creek  
Though man her route has wrought upon  
The fish and fowl her waters don*

When nightjars churr  
And barn owls stir  
Her water foams and froths  
Their screech to drown  
As they swoop down  
Where light plays Lutestring moths

This rush of life  
With wildness rife  
Fed from the Fairthorn flow  
And rivelin trout  
Swim riffles out  
Into the pools below

*The river flows from moor and peak  
In trickle, torrent, rill and creek  
Though man her route has wrought upon  
The fish and fowl her waters don*

Where herons wheel  
And fill their creel  
O'er maze of clawing briar  
They read the scrawl  
Of drystone wall  
Cross meadow, moor and mire

As creatures tread  
The paths we've shed  
And swim the routes we shun  
The managed flood  
Their riverblood  
Unwittingly has won

*The river flows from moor and peak  
In trickle, torrent, rill and creek  
Though man her route has wrought upon  
The fish and fowl her waters don*



## Cath Carr

### The Mallet

When I got the commission to write this song I didn't know anything about the area, but, as chance would have it, I saw that there was a group walk of Lower Bradfield and the Loxley Valley and thought I'd go along and have a look.

Whilst on the walk, I learned about the Sheffield Flood, from a guy with family who had been affected by the flood - 3 generations back, his great, great, great uncle. I decided to write about the flood from a personal point of view because of the way he was talking about his family, what it meant to him and how his mum had saved photos and passed them down to him, for him to pass down to his children and grandchildren.

The following week there was a second part of the walk, a lot further, about 10.5 miles. One of the walkers, also on the first walk, had had a memory sparked by hearing the story of the chap with the family connection. He went home and sought out a wooden mallet, made in the 1860's, that belonged to his great, great, great grandfather, John Morton, with a label detailing that it had been used by him to make the coffins of the victims of the flood. Thereby, the two men who had been on these walks found by chance that they were connected. Having consulted with his family, the man who owned the mallet wanted to pass it to the man who had told his family story, given its connection to the flood.

The personal side of that story hit home and fascinated me. I did more research in the Sheffield Archives and looked at assorted material about the flood. One particular piece of information concerns an 11 year old girl, staying in Sheffield with her aunt, who wrote to her grandmother in Leeds some days after the flood, to let her know that they were ok. It was approaching midnight when the dam broke and most people were in bed, fast asleep. She describes her aunt being woken by the screaming of the pigs, and calling out to the uncle that 'the world is at an end' and his reply of 'nay my lass, it cannot be'.

# The Mallet

Cath Carr

Transcribed by Cath Carr

V.1

John, she cries, the world is at an end,

3

Nay my lass, it can - not be

5

Surg - ing wa - ters rip - ping lids off peo - ple's lives, No

7

chance to wake from dream,

9

Nay my lass, it can - not be.

11

2

V.2

wood - en mal - let strikes an - oth - er blow,

15

The Four - and - fif - ty coff - ins more to go

18

Chis - el deep, rest their souls, For - ev - er held in sleep,

22

Chorus

Oh my lass, how could it be? Past and pres - ent lives,

24

Mem - o - ries re - vived, Flow - ered fields that bind us all,

27

Art - e - facts and ties, Le - ga - cies surv - ived, Ech - oes from be - fore,

31

Instrumental break

Oh my lass, it is for sure.

38 V.3

cest - ral hist' - ry viewed from cur - rent time, That

40

sense of place, a bond passed down the li - ne, His

42

narr - a - tive he tells of fami - ly per - ished in the flood, Which

44

stirs a faint re - call now in the man who's listen - ing on, of a

46

mess - age, and an heir - loom, in his own fami - ly for years, 'This

48

made a good few coff - ins for the vic - tims of the flood, A

50

mal - let, \_\_\_\_\_ thus des - cribed, Ser - en -

52 Chor.2/Outro

di - pi - ty arr - ived! Art - e-facts and ties, from past to pres-ent lives, The

56

mal - let's part is played, Co -

58 **molto rall.**

nnec - tions made re - main \_\_\_\_\_

*John, she cries, the world is at an end,  
Nay my lass, it cannot be  
Surging waters ripping lids off people's lives  
No chance to wake from dream  
Nay my lass, it cannot be.*

The wooden mallet strikes another blow  
Four-and-fifty coffins more to go  
Chisel deep, rest their souls  
Forever held in sleep  
*Oh my lass, how could it be?*

Past and present lives  
Memories revived  
Flowered fields that bind us all  
Artefacts and ties  
Legacies survived  
Echoes from before,  
*Oh my lass, it is for sure.*

Ancestral hist'ry viewed from current time  
That sense of place, a bond passed down the line  
His narrative he tells of family perished in the flood  
Which stirs a faint recall now in the man who's listening on  
Of a message, and an heirloom, in his own family for years:

*This made a good few coffins for the victims of the flood*

A mallet, thus described,  
Serendipity arrived!

Artefacts and ties  
From past to present lives  
The mallet's part is played  
Connections made remain...







## Rowan Rheingans Wide Open Water

My connection to the lakes, the reservoirs, the water of Sheffield is through swimming and through many of my friends who swim and row and run and use the lakes and the reservoirs. I wanted to write a song about them and the importance of these places for many people now.

I thought I'd write something about land access because a lot of the time, to swim in the reservoirs feels edgy, sometimes difficult and secretive and I thought it would be a political song about that. I decided to put a call out on Instagram and Twitter, my internet networks and some of the Facebook groups for the swimmers and the rowers to ask people to tell me about their last experience there; to tell me about their last swim or their last row; to send me a few lines or an image or a photo. What I received back was incredibly personal, almost like they were writing love letters about these places and the connection that there is. The song developed from their words and is made almost entirely from lines that I was given.

I'm very grateful for the people who sent me those words.

# Wide Open Water

Rowan Rheingans  
Transcribed by Rowan Piggott

**Verse**

We meet in - side the black and white we know there is less  
wind at dawn the sea - son dou - bles all a - round  
us as the sun ri - ses o - ver the wall In the  
glim - mer where the he - ron stands at the neck where all the  
world is thin we move in si - lence I know she's  
strong and that I love her like I love the dam

**Chorus**

Push a - way, push a - way love Push a - way, push a - way  
in - to the wide o - pen wa - ter

we meet inside the black and white  
we know there is less wind at dawn  
the season doubles all around  
as the sun rises over the wall

in the glimmer where the heron stands  
at the neck where all the world is thin  
we move in silence and before long  
i love her like i love the dam

**push away, push away, love  
push away, push away  
into the wide open water**

where the path it lies submerged  
how the stillness tastes and the air sounds when a storm is coming  
damflask is white horses  
the spray soaks all the runners running

**push away, push away, love  
push away, push away  
into the wide open water**

**you are not here to love us  
not here to give us what we want  
but sometimes you say  
come in and I'll carry you along  
in the wide open water**

we drive out from the city in the twilight  
the smell of fear and freedom at dale dyke when the rain is coming down  
so big this could be canada  
or someones else's home

the smell of pine and soil  
the water cold as knives  
how our grief reveals the fishes  
below the surface of our lives

you say rest here and i'll hold you  
come in and i'll carry you along  
in the wide open water



## Nancy Kerr

### Silver Cities

In his long book of memories, accounts and records of the flood, Samuel Harrison wrote a short chapter called 'Help From Other Towns'. It's a lovely chapter that just says, in a very matter of fact way, how people from outside Sheffield and outside the area didn't just view the flood as something that was happening to Sheffield, they really felt that it was a wider disaster. They were immensely generous with their gifts and their money and their help. I wanted to commemorate that in my song as it feels important to remember that kind of generosity and it also feels like we are sometimes a bit far from that now.

My song is called 'Silver Cities' which sounds quite urban for the area but one of my favourite views from the Lakeland is up high, looking over water and looking back at Sheffield, the city where I live, and it is all twinkly and silver.

The chorus is sung by the audience as a round and the tune goes up in steps, like lock-steps.

# Silver Cities

## Main Verse

Nancy Kerr  
Transcribed by Nancy Kerr

I dream a dream well, that Riv - elin's wa - ters are o - ver  
fare - well for - e - ver, the dam wall

4  
flow - ing sweet Ag - den's walls; Broom - head fare -  
crum - bles, and Dam - flask falls;

1. 2.

7  
Then comes the jay to grace the mor - ning, comes to wake the reck - less

11  
day; en - gi - neer of na - ture's glo - ry drives the rest - less dream a - way.

# Silver Cities

## Final Verse Canon

Nancy Kerr  
Transcribed by Nancy Kerr

Let me be you sanc - tua - ry, your sil - ver  
Let me

4  
ci - ty your wat - ers free, your sil - ver  
be you sanc - tua - ry, your sil - ver  
Let me

6  
brid - ges, what - ev - er brea - ches let me  
ci - ty your wat - ers free, your sil - ver  
be you sanc - tua - ry, your sil - ver  
Let me

8

be your sanc-tua - ry.

brid - ges, what - ev - er brea - ches let me be your sanc-tua -

ci - ty your wat - ers free, your sil - ver brid - ges, what - ev - er

be you sanc - tua - ry, your sil - ver ci - ty your wat - ers

11

ry.

brea - ches let me be your sanc-tua - ry.

free, your sil - ver brid - ges, what - ev - er brea - ches let me

14

be your sanc - tua - ry.

**1**  
 I dream a dream that Rivelin's waters  
 Are overflowing sweet Agden's walls  
 Broomhead farewell, farewell forever  
 The dam walls crumble and Damflask falls

Then comes the jay to grace the morning  
 Comes to wake the reckless day  
 Engineer of nature's glory  
 Drives the restless dream away

**2**  
 Then comes the jay to grace the morning  
 Comes to wake the reckless day  
 Engineer of nature's glory  
 Drives the restless dream away

It'll never happen my weary sleeper  
 For we have built the strongest walls  
 Now I must fly for I hear the keeper  
 His ricochet, his trickster calls

**3**  
 It'll never happen my weary sleeper  
 For we have built the strongest walls  
 Now I must fly for I hear the keeper  
 His ricochet, his trickster calls

It'll never happen, not in my garden  
 No flood or fire you'll ever see  
 Now I must fly for I hear the sirens  
 That close and open each century

**4**  
 It'll never happen, not in my garden  
 No flood or fire you'll ever see  
 Now I must fly for I hear the sirens  
 That close and open each century

And underwater, bells are ringing  
 In silver cities all around  
 The very soil joins the singing  
 Like rivers meeting underground

**5**  
 And underwater, bells are ringing  
 In silver cities all around  
 The very soil joins the singing  
 Like rivers meeting underground

I am the hope, I am the hubris  
 The concrete and the cracks within  
 And I will build you a sliver cradle  
 To rock your nameless baby in

**6**  
 I am the hope, I am the hubris  
 The concrete and the cracks within  
 And I will build you a sliver cradle  
 To rock your nameless baby in

*So let me be your sanctuary  
 Your silver city, your waters free  
 Your silver bridges, whatever breaches  
 Let me be your sanctuary*

*So let me be your sanctuary  
 Your silver city, your waters free  
 Your silver bridges, whatever breaches  
 Let me be your sanctuary*

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