**‘Piston, Pen & Press’: The Factory Muses**

**Song notes:**

1. **‘Up Heeze Ma Hairt.’ Performed by Gillian Frame and Findlay Napier. Tune written by Frame and Napier.**

‘Up Heeze My Heart’ was written by William Currie, a Borders millworker who started work as a boy in Ettrick Mills. Currie knew many of the other local mill poets, including James Currie (no relation). This poem was performed at a meeting of the Border Bards Society in 1879 and printed in the local press, as well as appearing in Currie’s one undated poetry collection.

1. **‘Shuttle-kissin’’ (Matilda Curly-Topper). Performed by Jennifer Reid to a traditional tune.**

These lyrics are by Sam Fitton (1868-1923), millworker, cartoonist, and dialect author. He worked as a piecer and weaver until 1903, when he left the factory due to ill-health and made his living from writing and performing. His work was associated with the *Cotton Factory Times*.

1. **‘A Factory Holiday’. Performed by Gillian Frame and Findlay Napier to the tune ‘Kelvin Grove.’**

The lyrics here are by Henry Syme, a weaver from Dunfermline in Fife active in the mid-late nineteenth century. Syme published in the local press, and in the *People’s Friend* under the pseudonym ‘Grandfather’.

1. **‘The Poo’er-lume Weaver’. Performed by Gillian Frame and Findlay Napier to the tune ‘Dainty Davie.’**

These song lyrics are by James Currie. Currie (1829-1890) worked in the Borders woollen mills as a child, before enlisting as a soldier and fighting in the Crimean war, where he lost an arm. He returned to work in the mills and as a postman.

1. **‘Weyvin’ Mewsic.’ Performed by Jennifer Reid to a traditional tune.**

The lyrics of this song are by John Hartley, born 1839, a well-known dialect poet and performer from Halifax. Hartley started his career as a pattern-maker at James Ackroyd and Son's Mill, but managed to make a career as an author and dialect performer. He produced Yorkshire comic almanacs as well as many poems, songs and recitations.

1. **‘Mule-Gate Musing, or Paradise as Pictured by a Piecer’**

This recitation is by Sam Fitton (1868-1923), late nineteenth-century Lancashire millworker, dialect writer and cartoonist. Fitton’s archives are held in Oldham.

For more information on our wider project, see [www.pistonpenandpress.org](http://www.pistonpenandpress.org).

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