

# ALFIE RICH



**Poem by Hadyn Richardson inspired by his Dad Alfie.**

**Alfred and the Cakes - story inspired by Haydn's poem.  
Drawings by Millie Joseph from Ynyshir Primary School**

Edited by Gayle Rogers

# Alfie Rich

Blue scars on his face, hands, back and neck

And a shortness of breath, that didn't check

His stride until these last few years

Bear witness to his miner's trade.

But little thought did he spare for his injuries,

More for the friends he'd made.

The wounds only skin deep left his friendly spirit intact.

He faced the work with a smile and never a care for ought he lacked.

He maintained you lacked for nothing if you possessed good health,

And still thankful for the vigour and strength he owned until now,

He faces each day unconcerned by Times harassed brow.

He often recalled his starting in the pit at the age of fourteen,

And but for fate's cruel intervention, 'what might have been'.

The sinking feeling in the stomach as the cage dropped,

Descending sharply in the shaft, the light flying away,

Extinguishing his hopes it seemed, but only for a day.

He quickly learned his trade, as eagerly as the poems, songs and dance,

The operettas which he would always perform, given half a chance.

His school days were over a new chapter begun.

The danger he shared with his brothers and workmates alike,

Drew them into a bond like soldiers under fire or collier's on strike.

This comradeship he stressed in all his reminiscence,

The humour, loyalty and decency, their resistance

To the hardship and discomfort of a miner's task.

Undertaken for the most part in darkness, out of each of the sun

Shaped this faithful, loving, gentle husband, father, brother, son.

As children we teased him about King Alfred burning the cakes,

And though for the most part these noble men are fakes,

That he was not counterfeit I'm inclined to concede.

As a quiz goer he boasted he knew all the kings and queens of England.

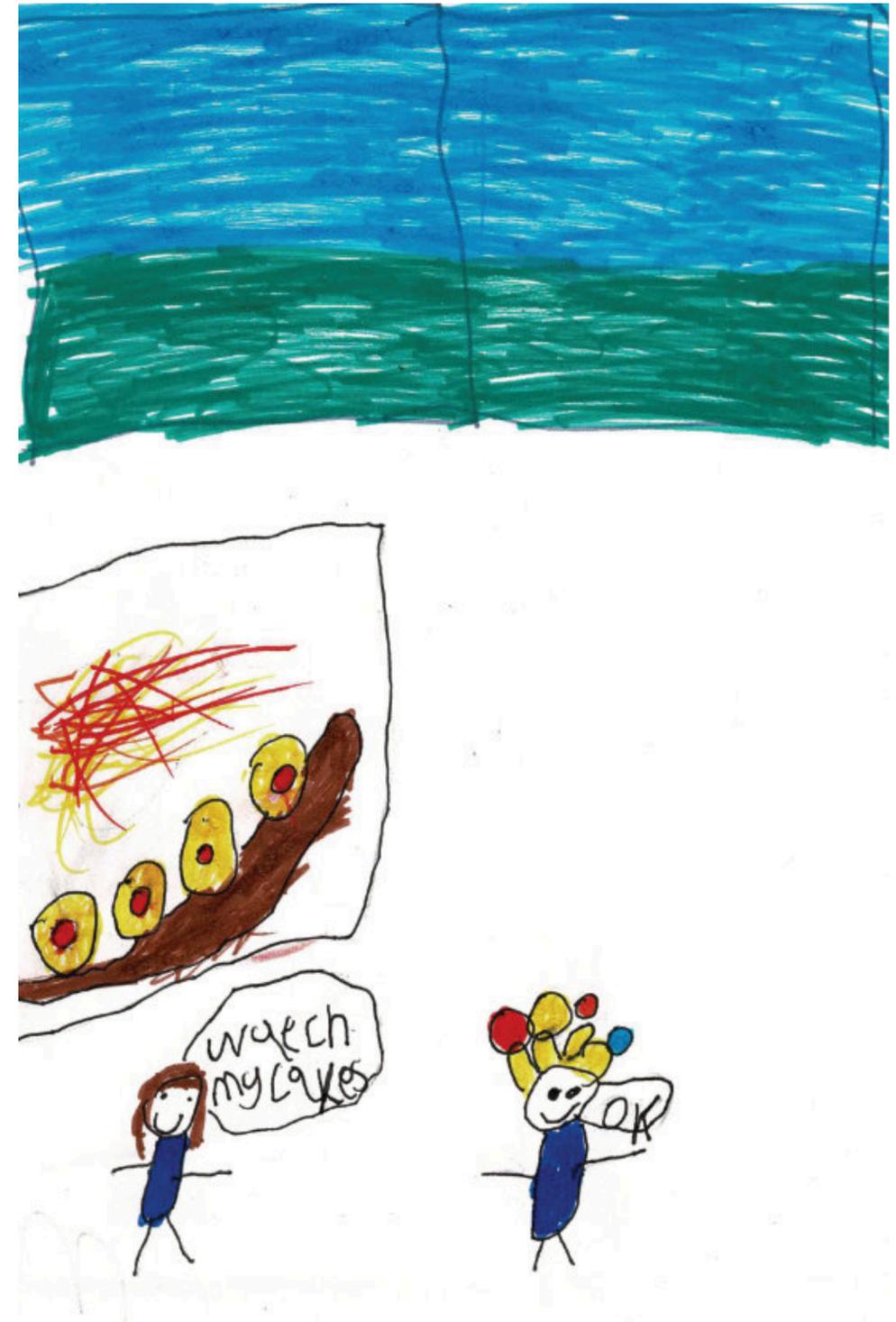
Gather all those rogues together, there may be one fit to shake his hand.

## Alfred and the Cakes

Haydn's father was called Alfred and Haydn remembers teasing his dad about burning cakes. This was because in history classes children were taught a funny story about when King Alfred was on the run from his viking enemies.



The king took refuge in the home of a peasant woman. She allowed him to stay, but only on the understanding that he would watch the cakes that she was baking (actually what we call small loaves of bread now).



She left the king alone in her house with her cakes.  
The king soon got distracted with all his worries and  
he forgot about looking after the cakes.

The king had let the cakes burn.  
When the woman came home she was furious about this  
and even though he was the king she really told him off for  
not looking after her cakes.





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