THE JOHN RAMSAY SPECIAL EVENT
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"LIGHTS AND SLEIGTHS FROM AYR"

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF JOHN RAMSAY

Presented by

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DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE UNVEILING OF A PLAQUE
DEDICATING THE RAMSAY GARDENS TO JOHN RAMSAY

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LIGHTS AND SLEIGHS FROM AYR

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By EDWIN A. DAWES, M.I.M.C.

That overworked cliché of “A legend in his own time” could find no better recipient than John Ramsay, Scotland’s greatest conjurer of the 20th century. In his native town of Ayr he was a well-known and much-loved resident, a prominent member of the community and familiar to all as the proprietor of a long-established grocery store in George Street near the Auld Brig, where the most amazing things could happen when you purchased your groceries.

John was also an expert and dedicated gardener whose green fingers achieved marvels with plants, with such effectiveness that he probably received more awards for horticulture than he did for magic. By horticultural means he raised over £2000 for war charities, and John is the only conjurer who has a public garden named in his honour, The Ramsay Gardens.

Although it is 38 years since John died, and two new generations of conjurers have grown up, his name is still revered whenever magicians meet. Today John would be even more at the centre of activities for during the past two decades there has been a significant change in emphasis in the styles of magic presented, with the close-up, intimate, small magic that John excelled at, being a focus of attention.

As it is almost four decades since John died, the number of people around today who saw him in his prime is small. I first met him in 1953 when he was aged 76. Like everyone else, I fell immediately under the spell he wove. The amazing magic
he purveyed, with hands that were small and pudgy, captivated layman and magician alike.

But it was fellow conjurers whom John delighted to baffle - those fully acquainted with the fundamental techniques of conjuring and aware, as they believed, of the finer points of misdirection. They were the ones John delighted to lead up the garden path (a very apt horticultural description in his case!), often with wickedly calculated moves (he called them feints), encouraging them to believe they were abreast of his artifice, only to discover that they were completely and utterly deceived by the wily little Scot. These, allied to a pawky sense of humour, were some of the characteristics that endeared him to magicians.

John Ramsay was born on 13 March 1877, the son of a master joiner. His interest in conjuring was first aroused about the age of seven when his mother showed him a few simple tricks. One of these was the Celtic version of Two Little Dickey Birds - Fly Away Peter, Fly Away Paul, and another was an easy code for divining which of his mother's fingers or thumb a guest had touched while John was out of the room. This ran: cum in, cum oot, cum on, cum bain, John.

He had the minimal of schooling and started to run errands for his father before becoming a messenger boy in a grocer's shop at the princely wage of three shillings per week. Later, he became manager of the shop at 10 George Street, Auld Brig End, and eventually, after marrying the owner's daughter, proprietor of the business.

As a youngster John would go to the theatres and visit fairs in and around Ayr, seeking out conjurers to watch their acts, often travelling many miles in the hope of seeing something novel. In later life he summed up his philosophy thus: "Always go and see every magician you can. If he's good then you are pleased with him, and if he's bad then you are pleased with yourself."

John also frequented the racecourse to observe first-hand the activities of exponents of the Three Card Trick (Find the Lady), Thimble Rig and Pricking the Garter, assimilating their techniques and studying their misdirection. Many of these characters would stay in lodging houses in the street where John's shop was located. They would come into the shop to purchase their liquor and tobacco and, learning of John's interest in conjuring, would often show him a few tricks. It was in these circumstances that he first saw the Stack of Pence performed, an item that later he used so devastatingly in his Cylinder and Coins.

When Ramsay was about 10, he saw an elderly conjurer display some amazing card tricks and the ball box, with the novel manipulation of palming the gimmicked section in and out of the box. He had no idea who the performer was. Years later,
in 1911, Ramsay saw in the pages of the *Magic Wand* a sketch portrait of a man he immediately recognised as the unknown performer. His name was Charlier. John wrote "If the portrait was anything like Charlier then I certainly saw Charlier, the original of that picture, that day in Ayr."

Now Charlier, one of the most mysterious men in magic, was believed to have been the illegitimate son of a Polish Count. He was an expert with cards and both Charles Bertram and Professor Hoffmann had lessons from him. Hoffmann in his *More Magic* (1890) described the Charlier Pass and also the Charlier system of marking cards by pricking them with a fine needle according to a code. Further, in Hoffmann’s novel *Conjurer Dick, or the Adventures of a Young Wizard*, a character called Mons. Ledoyen is based on the person and performances of Charlier. He was described thus: "A tall, gaunt figure, clad in a long brown coat. In his left hand a soft felt hat and in his right a small and rather shabby black bag. Hatchet-faced, lantern-jawed, cadaverous with sparse grey hair, extremely straight, hanging down almost to the collar of his coat. His nose was long, his eyes half closed and scarcely relieved with a vestige of an eyebrow but very keen and intelligent."

The intriguing feature of Ramsay’s identification of his mystery performer was that Charlier was generally believed to have left Britain for the Continent in 1884, some three years previously. Herbert Pratt, who carried out extensive researches on Charlier, reported them in the pages of that most sought-after magazine *The Midget Magician*, and also at the first Magic Circle Collectors’ Day in 1976, adduced some circumstantial evidence in support of Ramsay’s belief. However, according to Andrew Galloway, Ramsay was mistaken in this version reported to Pratt, both in relation to the place where he saw Charlier (it was in a Hall in Ayr) and his age at the time (it was ten). This would then put the year as about 1884 or 1885, which is much closer to the previously recorded "last sightings" of Charlier.

As might be expected from his interest in sleight of hand, manipulators particularly impressed John and early heroes were the Society conjurer Charles Bertram, the American coin manipulator T. Nelson Downs (who first came to Britain in 1899), and the brilliant young Englishman Martin Chapender, who tragically died of meningitis at the early age of twenty-five.

But in his younger days it wasn’t all magic by any means. John was a keen sprinter in his teens and subsequently an enthusiastic bowls player.

Magical societies are entirely a phenomenon of the 20th-century. The first in Britain were both inaugurated in 1905 - the British Magical Society in Birmingham and The Magic Circle in London. John Ramsay became a member of The Magic Circle in its earliest days. He was promoted to Associateship of the Inner Magic Circle on 29
July 1930 and to full Membership on 5 January 1932. Then he was awarded a Gold Star to his existing M.I.M.C. on 6 February 1940.

After joining The Magic Circle, Ramsay started to make regular trips to London to attend meetings and he also made the acquaintance of several of the London magical dealers. These included his fellow Scot, George McKenzie Munro, who ran Ornum’s, and Lewis Davenport, at that time just starting up the now-famous business, with whom he had a special affinity on account of Davenport’s superb manipulative skills with billiard balls and thimbles. But he also became very friendly with Will Goldston, initially when he was manager of Gamage’s Conjuring and Entertainment Department and subsequently, from 1914, when he traded under his own name.

Ramsay’s fame as a magician in Scotland had spread sufficiently by about 1910 for him to be offered a week’s trial at a Glasgow music hall, an offer he declined. He preferred the security of his grocery business to the uncertainties of the life of a professional entertainer, keeping magic as an enjoyable and profitable hobby.

John’s admiration for professional conjurers was not confined to sleight of hand performers and Chung Ling Soo, Percy Selbit and Dr Walford Bodie commanded his attention. However, it was the likes of Max Malini, Nate Leipzig, Allan Shaw, Max Sterling and, offstage, Horace Goldin, who claimed his greatest allegiance. The friendship he struck up with Max Sterling, after a chance encounter at a flower show in the Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, was most congenial and, in Andrew Galloway’s opinion, if anyone could lay claim to being Ramsay’s mentor (he was largely self-taught) then that man would be Sterling (John George Englehart MacLachlan, 1870-1941).

When John appeared for the Glasgow Society of Magicians on 16 November 1922 it was reported:

"Mr Ramsay’s palming with coins and eggs must have taken years of practice. His moves were exceptionally clean. This was the first time he did us the honour of appearing for the G.S.M. We sincerely hope he will give us a return visit."

He did – the following year with an extremely clever show. “Ramsay is without a shadow of doubt a master in the sleight of hand with coins.”

When Ayr Brother Conjurers was inaugurated on 19 November 1924, John Ramsay became the first President. The early days of the club can be traced from reports submitted to The Sphinx. At one of their functions we find Ramsay in a rather unusual guise, giving excellent imitations of a knife-grinder, a man sawing wood
and a bee. He concluded with a humorous ventriloquial dialogue with his doll Bobby. Later in the evening he returned to conjure with the more familiar thimbles, coins and cards.

In 1925 Ramsay was invited to join a rather exclusive Glasgow coterie of magicians known as The Mystic Twelve. While still on the topic of magical societies, after the International Brotherhood of Magicians (I.B.M.) came into being in 1922, a British Ring was formed in 1928 and John Ramsay was an early member. He was destined to become its President in 1948-49.

The first British Ring Convention was held at Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, in 1931 and John Ramsay attended. At that time he was relatively unknown to the majority of English magicians, and he astounded them with pure sleight of hand and brilliant misdirection when he appeared in the competitions in full evening dress. He won all four prizes, including the best trick shown there, The Aerial Treasury.

In 1938 at Malvern, when the British Ring Shield was competed for the first time, Ramsay won it with a 7-minute act. The following year at Southport he was placed second after the rule was passed that you cannot win the Shield two years in succession.

The first prize he ever won was the Second Prize of £3 in the Carlton Competition in Selbit’s *The Wizard* in 1908 for 'The Five Fly Cards’. Post-war, he won First Prize for Close-Up Magic at the Barcelona Congress in 1950, a cup that was exhibited in his shop thereafter. Although he tried on several occasions for the Grand Prix at the F.I.S.M. Conventions, it was a sorrow to him that he never quite managed to pull it off, but when you consider that he was into his seventies when he first entered these post World War II contests, that he was essentially a close-up performer entering the stage magic arena, it is remarkable that he came so close to achieving his goal.
There was, however, another factor which entered the equation and which came to a head in his final attempt to win the Grand Prix at the F.I.S.M. Congress in Paris in 1951. John, who sold a lot of liquor over the counter of his shop, in middle age started to consume the golden fluid himself. It started, as with so many other entertainers, as a booster of confidence prior to performing. And the more he came into the limelight in the Conventions in the 1930s, the more he needed to reassure himself, and his consumption increased proportionately. Interestingly, it did not seem to impair his prowess nor his ability to confound, as many American magicians found when, in order to try to fathom his methods, they would ply him with whisky. John downed it all, doubtless as a gesture to promoting good Scottish-American relations, and continued to baffle them.

The tale is told of one such attempt when, after the consumption of a bottle or two of liquor, John was quite unable to stand. So two conventioneers obligingly propped him up by placing their shoulders under his armpits. In this position he then proceeded to perform some of the most impeccable close-up magic they had ever seen - and they were still no wiser as to his methods! But what liquor could not achieve the almighty dollar could and John was happy to teach, provided the price was right, and he made a lot of money on his various American visits. However, I digress - back to the Demon Drink.

To fortify himself for the Grand Prix in Paris he drank heavily all day and by the time of the contest he was quite ill. Both Victor Farelli and Max Andrews advised him not to go on stage but he disregarded them and proceeded with the act. He got through it alright and technically there was no mishap. What suffered, however, was his presentation and showmanship - the charm that endeared him to his audience.

He came second to Geoffrey Buckingham, was bitterly disappointed and convinced that he would have won had he been in full control of himself. This episode had a salutary effect. On return home he vowed never to touch alcohol again, and for the rest of his life he honoured that vow. But never again did he compete for the Grand Prix, although he continued to attend the F.I.S.M. Conventions.

John's membership of the I.B.M. led him to look westward to the parent body's annual conventions in the U.S.A. and in 1934 he decided to attend the June gathering at Batavia, New York State. He sailed from the Clyde in the Cunarder Cameronia. A photo in the June Sphinx shows John keeping excellent company with Al Baker, Sid Lorraine, John Mulholland, William Russell and Bill Durbin, the I.B.M. President. The report by Editor Mulholland noted: "Next was John Ramsay with an act of coin manipulations. All the magicians talked about his perfect misdirection. There were
two sensational features to the act. The first, his amazing manipulations, and the second, the idea of a Scot throwing money away."

Two years later, in 1936, the I.B.M. Convention was again held at Batavia and Ramsay decided to repeat his experience, travelling there in style on the maiden voyage of the Queen Mary, now sadly a rusting hulk masquerading as an hotel at Long Beach, California. John’s travelling companion on this occasion was Will Blyth, Librarian and prominent member of The Magic Circle.

An Entertainment was presented in the main lounge when Ramsay appeared together with Larry Adler, Cora Goffin and Henry Hall and his famous orchestra. His billing in the programme appeared as "Sleight of Lights from AYR". He was acclaimed the star turn of the entertainment on the front page of the Glasgow Evening News on Monday, 1 June.

An amusing anecdote of this visit arose from him sharing a hotel room with Will Blyth. One evening Blyth decided to turn in early while Ramsay went out on the town with a notable American magical character, Bob Gysel. In the early hours of the morning when they returned John discovered that he did not have his room key but Gysel told him there was no need for him to go down to Reception for a duplicate as he had his lock picks with him. Gysel then proceeded to run through the whole gamut of his set of picks without success and was advocating the use of a jemmy when the voice of Blyth was heard from within. "Is that you, John? I couldn’t get to sleep. Come in, the door’s not locked."

It was in 1939 at the World’s Fair in New York that Ramsay first met Dai Vernon although a full rapport was not established until the post-war years. Both held each other in the highest regard.

By 1939 American convention-going had become popular for British magicians and in that year a party of 21 attended the I.B.M. Convention at Battle Creek, Michigan, led by the Australian professional Les Levante. Ramsay was one of the group that travelled on the French rival to the Queen Mary, the S.S. Normandie.

During the visit they dined at the Kiwanis Club where Ramsay "delighted a huge and enthusiastic audience with his thimble routine". That evening the British party were guests of John Mulholland and took dinner with him at his hotel. Friday night was the All British Show and on the following evening the British group went to the State Theatre at Kalamazoo (about 30 miles from Battle Creek) and gave a midnight show. Harry Blackstone Senior was in the audience, came up to assist Levante, and paid tribute to the British artistes.
They staged a show at Chicago, under the sponsorship of Dr Harlan Tarbell, before a huge audience of 1800 and a final Farewell Performance was sponsored by Max Holden at the Hecksher Theatre in New York. Ramsay, of course, played a prominent part in all of these shows. The July issue of *The Sphinx* carried a report of his role in the All-British Show at Battle Creek. "We loved Ramsay - here was entertainment with a bit of magic. He pushed the cigarette in here, it came out there. In his chin, out his mouth. He made us laugh when he tried to light his match on his shoe and found it burning in his other hand. Then his coins, oh well, we don't know where they went and we thought we knew T. Nelson Downs backwards and forwards. Why did we laugh at all those white handkerchiefs from the hat? Well, we think we laughed at John, we can't believe those were funny now. He threw out his ribbon streamers, put his table in his hat, and waltzed off with his cane much too soon; we wanted more of John Ramsay."

World War II then put an end to transatlantic magic junketing for the next six years and, indeed, it was 1950 before Ramsay made his next trip States-side. Goodliffe Neale, who had started his weekly magic magazine *Abracadabra* post-war in 1946, led a party of British magicians to the I.B.M. Convention in Chicago. It was the first time such a group had flown the Atlantic to a magic convention and they named themselves 'The Flying Sorcerers'. They comprised Goodliffe, John Ramsay, Francis White, Geoffrey Buckingham, Max Andrews and Tom Harris. Ramsay's presence

had been specially requested by the Convention Committee who wanted him back to see once again the man who had so beguiled them on his three pre-war visits.

Nine close-up shows were scheduled for Ramsay and Goodliffe complained that these were too much for a 73-year-old. John not only took them all in his stride but also gave personal tuition in his bedroom in the small hours of the morning, and then spent the rest of the night counting the dollars he had earned, much to the annoyance of his room-mate, Tom Harris. Ramsay subsequently told a Daily Dispatch reporter that his happiest memory of the trip was conjuring several hundred dollars out of the Americans for teaching them how to conjure.

In this connection it is perhaps worth recalling some of what Victor Farelli aptly called 'Ramsayisms':

Conjuring is an art. It is a gift, you either have it or you don't, and if you don't have it you can never learn it.

Conjuring is a gift - otherwise there wouldn't be any Scottish conjurers!

I work alone, apparently, but I have an invisible assistant - Miss Direction.

If you want them to look at you, look at them.
If you want them to look at it, look at it yourself.

Hold and hide. (A technique that Ramsay shared with Max Malini.)

A new honour fell to Ramsay in 1953 when he became the first conjurer in Scotland to be televised, together with seven other artistes, from the Royal Naval Station, Rosyth, in a 45-minute programme. Afterwards he was besieged in his shop by autograph hunters and well-wishers.

Now let’s turn attention to Ramsay's publications. He first went into print with a trick in 1908 when the February issue of Munro’s The Wizard published 'A Fine Thimble Move'. Four years later he contributed two items to the Magician
Monthly, in August 1912, both with thimbles. 'The Latest Thimble Trick' was an entirely new vanish for a thimble, and the other was 'A Comedy Trick with a Thimble'. They were accompanied by a cartoon of Ramsay by the talented artist Howard Elcock and by a rather bantering and not very enlightening interview. However, he did emphasize the importance of practice and rehearsal and of aiming for originality. He considered he was best at thimble tricks.

He also stated his belief that competitions are good for magic, speaking as a prize-winner himself.

Andrew Galloway has reported that Ramsay did not keep notebooks or manuscript records of his effects. Those he performed regularly he remembered, of course, but there were many routines devised for special occasions, which subsequently he could not recall and, sadly, these have been lost to posterity.

Other items appeared over the years in various magazines but it was not until post World War II that any of his work appeared in book form. This came about as a consequence of him teaming up with Victor Farelli who, by this time, was functioning as a full-time magical author. Farelli (1888-1955) had a Scottish background, a Scottish mother and a Belgian father, and had served an engineering apprenticeship in Glasgow around 1910-11 but apparently did not meet Ramsay at this time.

Farelli was an intriguing character who had served in the First World War as a Liaison Officer, probably in Military Intelligence. He had a good command of languages and post-war worked as Assistant Director of the Passport Office in Cairo before starting a career as a professional magician. During World War II he was in Bermuda for a period on undefined Government business.

As a result of their collaboration four books were published, two in 1948. The substantial John Ramsay’s Routine with Cups and Balls was published by George Armstrong. The inscription to De Vega in my copy illustrates Ramsay’s signature, which was executed in a novel manner. Starting with ‘ohn’, he skipped the R and, without lifting the pen, continued with ‘amsay’, returning with a flourish to complete the R and then continuing with the J to link up where he started. His other three books, namely Cylinder and Coins (1948), Triple Restoration (1949) and Four Little Beans (1952) he published personally in Ayr.

At this juncture I wish to express on behalf of all magicians the tremendous debt of gratitude we owe to Andrew Galloway. After first meeting John Ramsay in 1955 he was befriended by John and became his protégé and confidant. Andrew learned first-hand from Ramsay and that knowledge he has shared with posterity by writing three books, The Ramsay Legend (1969), The Ramsay Classics (1977) and The Ramsay
Finale (1982), recording hitherto unpublished material and much biographical information. It is an invaluable trilogy.

During a recent visit to the U.S.A. (August 1994) I was fortunate to discover that friend Bill McIlhany possessed some video material of Ramsay which he kindly converted to the PAL system so that clips of John in action could be seen this afternoon. These include the Battle Creek Convention in 1939, a brief section of a Harry Stanley - Lewis Ganson film in the 1950s, and finally some footage taken by Mystic Craig at the British Ring Convention at Harrogate in 1950. The last of these is notable for being a sound film and thus Ramsay’s voice is heard.

As he noted in his 1912 interview recorded in the Magician Monthly, John regarded himself at that time as "best at thimble tricks". Not surprisingly, therefore, he adapted thimbles as an advertising medium. Metal thimbles bearing their names were used by several firms to advertise products and when Ramsay first encountered Eno’s Fruit Salts, he asked the salesman for the address of the manufacturer. He then went to the company where moulds were made of his fingers and two dies cast for thimbles of different sizes. These bore the message "John Ramsay, Conjuring Entertainer, Ayr". After producing a thimble on each digit of both hands he would then throw them one at a time into the audience as souvenirs. He is on record of stating that he distributed some 35,000 thimbles during his career. In parenthesis, it is worth noting that the motor skills involved in thimble manipulation exceed those required for other types of manipulation.

In some of his stage coin routines he would, as a finale, also throw the coins out into the audience, although these were the gold foil-covered chocolate variety and, to the best of my knowledge, not personalised in any way. However, Ramsay did have some cardboard coins bearing on the reverse the same legend as his thimbles, and the heads of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on the obverse with the date of 1937, suggesting they were produced at the time of the Coronation. These coins are simultaneously the hope and despair of the magic coin and token collector. When Jimmy Findlay wrote his book Conjurers Coins Medals in 1964 he had located only one known example, in the Edgar Heyl Collection at Baltimore, which is now owned by Burton Sperber.

I first met John Ramsay in 1953, at the very first magical function I ever attended - the Second S.A.M.S. Convention at Largs. The diminutive figure, with a tobbacco-less cigarette dangling from his mouth, performing incredible routines with coins on ’sky hooks’ and producing thimbles, each with a loud plop, was an experience to be
cherished in the memory. From then until his death nine years later I came to know him well.

It was a long-standing tradition of my then home club, the Scottish Conjurers Association in Glasgow, that we had fairly regular John Ramsay Nights - John had become our Honorary President in 1950 - and he would come along to mystify and entertain us but never to explain just how his miracles were achieved.

In the late 1950s his sight deteriorated due to cataracts. He had an operation at the Glasgow Eye Infirmary, where I remember visiting him, was fitted out with pebble bifocals and was soon back in circulation doing his magic.

One incident I recall with amusement occurred in 1959 when Dr Harlan Tarbell was the guest lecturer at the S.A.M.S. Convention held at Largs once again. At breakfast John sat with his old friend Tarbell - a man whom Bob Parrish so endearingly described as "an all-American nut". Tarbell was a Doctor of Naprapathy and held, shall we say, interesting views on diet. Although tucking into a Scottish breakfast of eggs and bacon without noticeable distaste, Tarbell was holding forth on the special food he normally consumed. I might add that he was a thin, underfed-looking individual whose clothes hung loosely upon him. "I eat these foods" he said "and look at me. I'm sixty-nine." John looked at him quizzically and replied "I eat what I like and look at me, I'm eighty-two!"

In 1960 the Scottish Conjurers' Association sought to honour its Honorary President with a Testimonial Supper. Greetings telegrams were received from Goodliffe, John's old friend John Knox, and the British Magical Society. Duncan Johnstone paid tribute to John, Jimmy Findlay came from the Isle of Wight for the occasion and spoke about John and his association with Victor Farelli, and President Eddie Dawes presented John with an illuminated address, the work of Vice-President Savola.
In 1961 the annual Scottish Association of Magical Societies Convention was once more held at Ayr. John was very much part of the action, performing with his half-crowns and four little beans. At the Gala Show President George Pigott presented John with a volume containing the signatures of hundreds of magicians from all over Scotland and England, especially members of The Magic Circle. The inscribed frontispiece read:

"To John Ramsay M.I.M.C., Honorary Life Vice-President of the Scottish Association of Magical Societies, as a token of the affection and esteem in which he is held by his fellow magicians."

It proved to be his last S.A.M.S. Convention.

Early in 1962 John was admitted to Ballochmyle Hospital where he died on 16 January in his 85th year. Thus did Scotland’s Grand Old Man of Magic depart from our ranks, leaving the magical experience of all who had seen him perform incomparably enriched by his skill and artistry.

The Lights and Sleights had gone from Ayr for all time, never more would his thimbles pop nor the sky hooks be anchored in space to receive John's half-crowns. He was mourned by magicians throughout the world, including many to whom he
was but a legendary name, and revered as the man who complemented that other famous son of Ayr, Rabbie Burns. While Rabbie enchanted with the poetry of words, John beguiled with the poetry of sleight of hand. But John did have some poetry of words too, some doggerel verse that he first heard at the I.B.M. Convention at Battle Creek in 1939 and which he loved to recite at magical gatherings, the last time being at the S.A.M.S. Convention at Ayr in 1961. I can think of no more appropriate way to conclude this tribute to John Ramsay than by reading what essentially became his oral signature piece.

As I go near and far 'ere my journey's end
May I always find friends just as true,
May Dame Fortune in kindness my daily path bend
To a bunch of good fellows like you.

I have found in this world that we get what we give,
We are done to forsooth as we do,
And I think Paradise some sort of a place
With a bunch of good fellows like you.

And I can only say this, and it's said with a wish,
And it's said with a sentiment true,
I shall always regret each hour that I miss,
From a bunch of good fellows like you.

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