

The Work o' The Weavers

The musical score is written in 6/8 time and consists of seven staves of music. The notes are primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some beamed eighth notes. Chord symbols are placed above the staves: G7, C, F, C, G7, C, F, C, G7, C, G7, F, C, F, C, G7, C, G7, F, C, G7, C.

1. We are all met together here to sit and to crack
With our glasses in our hands and our work upon our backs
And there's not a trade among them all can neither mend nor mak
Gin it wasna' for the work o' the weavers.
2. If it wasna' for the weavers, what would you do?
You wouldna' hae cloth that's made o' wool
Ye wouldna' hae a coat neither black nor the blue
Gin it wasna' for the work o' the the weavers.
3. The hireman chiels, they mock us and crack aye aboots.
They say that we are thin faced, bleached like cloots
But yet for all their mockery, they canna do wi oots,
No they canna want the work o' the weavers.
4. There's our rights and our slaters and glaziers and a',
Our doctors and ministers and them that live by law
And our friends in South America, tho them we never saw
But we know they wear the work of the weavers.

5. There's our sailors and our soldiers, we know they're all bauld
But if they hadna clothes, faith they couldna live for cauld.
The high and low, the rich and poor, a'body young and auld
They widna want the work o the weavers.

6. There's folk that's independent of other tradesman work.
The women need no barbers and dykers need no clerk,
But none o' them can do wi'out a coat or a shirt.
No, they canna want the work o the weavers.

7. The weaving is a trade that never can fail
As longs we need a cloth to keep another hale.
So let us aye be merry over a bicket of good ale
And drink a health to the weavers.

Words:

ae: one

bauld: bold

bicker: wooden beaker

chiels: chaps, boys

clout: cloth

fecht: fight

gin: if

hale: whole

haud: keep

od: exclamation, polite version of 'God'.

puir: poor

sark: shirt

thegither : together

want: do without

wark: work

woo : wool

wrights: carpenters

"The Work o' the Weavers" is a Scottish trade propaganda song found in the book **Victoria's Inferno: Songs of the Old Mills, Mines, Manufactories, Canals and Railways** (Jon Raven, editor) (1978) in which it is stated that the lyrics and tune were composed by David Shaw, a Forfar weaver. He composed the song in the 1840's and he would perform it, "with other of his compositions, at trade and Chartist meetings during that period".

Forfar is the county town of Angus, Scotland. It has been both a traditional market town and a major manufacturing center for linen and jute during and after the Industrial Revolution.

The song was also printed in Ford's **Vagabond Songs and Ballads of Scotland** (1899).

It is #374 in the **Roud Folksong Index**.

It was recorded by Ewan MacColl on **Shuttle and Cage** (1957), Ray Fisher's **Traditional Songs of Scotland** (2016), The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem and others.