

## **The Bicycle story**

**Peter Dawson:** I remember asking me Granny one night, what she did when she was young. And she said, well, like you, I used to gan te dances. Well, I said, here? Like the Jubilee Hall? Aye, went there, but she says, the farthest we ever went was Otterburn. Otterburn? Aye. I says, that's a lang way, it's aboot fowerteen mile from here. Fowerteen mile there 'n fowerteen mile back. I says, what did you gan there for? She says, well, te the dance. Elsie an' me used te gan te the dance. But I says, why did you gan there? Well, she says, it was a change.

But I says, how did you get there? We walked, we took a bike. You walked but took the bike? Aye. But there was two o' you. Aye. Wi' one bike? Aye. Well, how'd you manage? Well, you'd sometimes walk together and then I would get on the bike an' bike for mebbes a mile up the road. Stop. Leave the bike, carry on walking. Elsie would come along, pick the bike up, get on the bike, pass me another mile up the road, all the way to Otterburn and all the way back. I says, I couldn't do that. That's what you had te de.

There was one Saturday morning we wor comin' back, 'cause the dance was always on the Friday night. We're deein' this from Otterburn, just got to the bottom end of Thropton. And she says, you knaa where Billy Marsden lived. Here was Billy comin' oot the door. Well, Billy was the postman, and he had a horse and cart. So I says to Elsie, this is grand, Elsie, we'll get a lift doon with Billy. 'Cos Billy was a relation of me Granny's.

So he gets doon and looks up. Oh hello Lil, where you been? We've been to the dance. Where you gannin' noo? Oh, we're just gan all the way back hyem. Oh, he says, you got the bike. Aye. I'll tell ye what I'll dae. I'll make it easy for you, I'll put the bike on the cart. I looked at Elsie and Elsie looked at me and thought, grand, we're ganna get a lift. Aye, he put the bike on the cart and turned roond and said, and I'll just drop it off at the top of The Model for you. And away he went. And we are standing there, and the horse and cart and

him's gannin' up the bank oot o' Thropton for te gan te Rothbury. We had to walk the last two mile.

Later I discovered that he could carry the bike but he couldn't carry passengers. If somebody had seen him and it was reported for carrying passengers, he would have gittin' wrang. But he could carry the bike 'cos it was classed as a parcel. That's what we had te de when we went to the dance, unlike ye lot nou, ye just jump in the car. Ye divn't knaa what it's like.