

On London's Buses

by [Paul Martin Freeman](#) (April 2023)



With Singing Hearts and Throaty Roarings, Jock MacFadyen, 1983

The Number 5: English Pride

The 5 from Romford goes to Canning Town
And on its way it passes Becontree.
These towns enjoy but little of renown
And never have achieved celebrity.

Yet from such places in the nation's heartland
Young men went forth and for their country died.
The bank clerk, factory worker and the farmhand,
Forevermore a source of English pride.

The Number 7: Taking Me Home

The 7 takes me home each day to Acton
From where I toil in busy Oxford Circus,
And never fails to give me satisfaction
With every season ticket that I purchase.

I slip away to dreamland in my corner
Where no one ever wakes me though I snore.
And as I doze there, sunk in blissful torpor,
The 7 gently rocks me to my door.

The Number 8: Brief Encounter

Upon the 8 to Tottenham Court Road Station,
Which travels through Old Ford and Bethnal Green,
I once pursued a charming brief flirtation
With quite the prettiest thing you've ever seen.

This little person said her name was Milly;
“I’m three,” she said unsurely looking shy.
But then she said, “Oh Daddy, don’t be silly!”
And so we took her home, her mum and I.

The Number 9: Sacred National Pilgrimage

From Hammersmith the faithful number 9
Its sacred national pilgrimage performs.
Through Kensington, past Albert’s golden shrine,
To Knightsbridge with its men in uniforms.

Then on it goes to glorious Hyde Park Corner
To honour those who have for country died;
And last, the square that celebrates Trafalgar,
Where Nelson, England’s Saviour, looks with pride.

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Paul Freeman is an art dealer in London. The poems are from *The Bus Poems: A Tale of the Devil*, currently in preparation. His book, *A Chocolate Box Menagerie*, is published by New English Review Press and is available [here](#)

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