

The Lancashire Boxing Day Bear Hunt

The Lancashire Boxing Day Bear Hunt was a wonderful sporting affair -
Every rider and horse had turned out in force, the world and its dog were all there.
The Great and the Good gave their blessing, every Town Clerk and Mayoress and Mayor,
For the Lancashire Boxing Day Bear Hunt –
The one thing it lacked ... was a bear.

They set off at daybreak from Salford ; the sniffers and trackers went first.
The rest in pursuit, a huge picnic to boot and a barrel for those with a thirst.
By the time they got up to Ramsbottom, of sheep they had found quite a few
But no hide nor hair that belonged to a bear –
Not even in Manchester zoo.

They didn't find black bears in Blackburn, no "Bear tally-ho" did they call
Not a grizzly at Risley, nor a big 'un at Wigan and Bury weren't bear-y at all.
With a blast on his horn the Hunt-Master called the column to order and said:
"We'll just have to go a bit faster –
The boogers are too far ahead."

They tried Formby and Morecambe and Clitheroe, and many a comical name,
They pressed on at Preston and bolted through Bolton but still the result was the same.
At the end of two days there was nowhere to hunt, they had searched every acre of ground –
Every dale and fell, town and village as well –
Not so much as a paw-print was found.

So sadly the Hunt-Master got off his horse: "Call off the chase!" went the cry.
The ranks had grown thinner, there was nothing for dinner,
And what's more the barrel was dry.
It was back to the mill for the mill-folk,
For t' shop-folk 'twas back to the shop:
The Lancashire Boxing Day Bear Hunt
Had been the most terrible flop.

Back at Santa's grotto in Salford just as midnight was starting to chime,
Mother Bear looked around at her husband and cubs
And grinned: "We've been here all the time".
The Hunt blamed divine intervention
Consoling themselves with a drink.
From on high Ursa Major, the Bloody Great Bear
Looking down on them all gave a wink.

*A true monologue written in appreciation of a form of droll northern humour which we
southerners can't really emulate. Should be read respectfully in an appropriate accent.*