**Limericks**

Variants of the form of poetry referred to as Limerick poems can be traced back to the fourteenth century English history. Limericks were used in Nursery Rhymes and other poems for children. But as limericks were short, relatively easy to compose and bawdy or sexual in nature they were often repeated by beggars or the working classes in the British pubs and taverns of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventh centuries. The poets who created these limericks were therefore often drunkards! Limericks were also referred to as dirty.  
  
**Where does the term 'Limerick' come from?**   
The word derives from the Irish town of Limerick. Apparently a pub song or tavern chorus based on the refrain "Will you come up to Limerick?" where, of course, such bawdy songs or 'Limericks' were sung.  
  
**Limericks - The form**   
Limericks consist of five anapaestic lines.  
Lines 1, 2, and 5 of Limericks have seven to ten syllables and rhyme with one another.   
Lines 3 and 4 of Limericks have five to seven syllables and also rhyme with each other.

There was a Young Lady of Norway,  
Who casually sat on a doorway;  
When the door squeezed her flat,  
She exclaimed, 'What of that?'  
This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

There was an Old Man on a hill,  
Who seldom, if ever, stood still;  
He ran up and down,  
In his Grandmother's gown,  
Which adorned that Old Man on a hill.

There was an Old Person of Dover,  
Who rushed through a field of blue Clover;  
But some very large bees,  
Stung his nose and his knees,  
So he very soon went back to Dover.

There was a Young Lady whose chin,  
Resembled the point of a pin;  
So she had it made sharp,  
And purchased a harp,  
And played several tunes with her chin.