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**Fair Do’s: Tom Hadaway and the regional voice in 1970s British television**

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**Abstract:**

This article considers the 1970s television career of the writer Tom Hadaway, drawing upon archival holdings, public and personal, to analyse and contextualise his dramas made for the BBC. Hadaway, who spent much of his professional life working in the fishing industry, has some reputation in his native North East of England for his stage and television plays, mostly dealing with the people, customs and history of the coastal area of North Shields. Beyond his birthplace, however, Hadaway remains an obscure figure. Through an analysis of his work within the climate of its production, this article argues for the writer’s unique contribution to British television culture; it also offers a case-study for the historical opportunities and limitations for the ‘regional’ voice in British broadcasting.

**Keywords**: Tom Hadaway, regional writing, BBC, British television history, television authorship, television and place

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By the time of his death in 2005, Tom Hadaway had become a legendary figure among writers and audiences in the North East of England. Celebrated for a body of stage, film and television work documenting the people, landscape and history of his native North Shields, and in particular the declining fishing industry where he worked much of his professional life, Hadaway’s writing – at least on Tyneside – was said to be ‘better known than that of Pinter, Stoppard or Ayckbourn’.[[1]](#endnote-1) His death was the lead item on the BBC *Look North* regional television news programme, and printed tributes emphasised his integrity as a writer, the singularity of a style that fused the vernacular and the lyrical, and his role as mentor to generations of actors, writers, organisations and film-makers; for example, it was said that he ‘wrote about the commonfolk (a word he much preferred to the “working class”) with a true insider’s knowledge’.[[2]](#endnote-2)

Beyond his native Tyneside, however, Hadaway is less known; his obscurity for nationwide audiences, and for the BBC itself, neatly summarised by a geographically muddled mention of *The Happy Hunting Ground* (1976) in the *BBC Handbook* of 1977. This *Play for Today* (1970-84)by ‘Tom Haddaway [sic]’, set in Hadaway’s familiar North Shields, is singled out as ‘remarkable for conveying the atmosphere of an East Anglian fishery town’.[[3]](#endnote-3) Such confusion was evidently shared by some of the viewers polled by the BBC who complained that the ‘dialect and jargon of the fish market was difficult or even incomprehensible’; the problem of comprehension was also cited – ‘the Northumbrian dialect presented a bit of a problem for Southerners’ – in the equivalent report for the short drama *God Bless Thee Jacky Maddison* (1974).[[4]](#endnote-4) Such difficulties may shed some light on why Hadaway’s television work has not yet been critically evaluated and contextualised, despite a growing conceptual and historical interest in questions of regionalism and ‘place’ in British television culture.[[5]](#endnote-5)

Towards the end of his career, albeit at a time when he was struggling to find commissioned work for television, Hadaway made some characteristically modest comments on his writing:

My problem was and is that I’m not really professional. […] I’m not a deeply resourceful, literary person. I’m just someone who came very late in life from the fish quay to have a go and I happened to have a bit of success, and I think it was a time when people like me were allowed in. […] I’m one of those people who might have something to say from their own backyard, who can have a little facility for dialogue and can get it down. […] We were given a chance, but I didn’t really have the credentials to establish a place as a writer, in theatre or television, you know.[[6]](#endnote-6)

Through its analysis of Hadaway’s BBC work in the 1970s, this article argues for the writer’s unique contribution to British television culture; it also offers a case-study for the historical opportunities and limitations for the ‘regional’ voice in British broadcasting. Hadaway’s career has various claims to distinction, not least his simultaneous professional lives as fishmonger and dramatist, and his accelerated success in the early 1970s, moving within the space of only a few years from being an unpublished writer, jotting down tales at the back of his fish shop, to being a regularly commissioned TV dramatist. His body of broadcast work is slender, but, whether taken in isolation or in relation to his parallel career as a playwright and poet, it is highly individual: personal in the sense of his dramatizing of incidents and people from an eventful childhood and working life, but also in terms of a unschooled writing style that is neither straightforwardly naturalistic nor in the vanguard of experimentalism. Indeed, Hadaway’s self-perceived ‘outsider’ status, in part through remaining to work and live in his native Tyneside, also derived from his discomfort with ‘placing my work alongside other writers, as part of a “tradition”’; formative influences included the heightened, lyrical speech of J. M. Synge, the short stories of A. E Coppard, and Dickens’ *David Copperfield*, which ‘opened my mind to ideas of goodness, what it means to be without power’.[[7]](#endnote-7) Hadaway’s own ‘heightened’ realism gives grandeur, respect and often love to his characters; his output preserves an archive of forgotten attitudes, places and attitudes in a way that bears some comparison with that other famous chronicler of bygone Tyneside, Catherine Cookson, in terms of his creative excavation of landscape and history.

Furthermore, Hadaway’s career complicates definitions of the ‘regional’ television writer, and the expected trajectory of such a figure from the ‘margins’ to the ‘centre’. As Lez Cooke notes, regional television can be understood, in the UK context at least, to take two main forms: drama set regionally but produced centrally for a national audience – an example being *When the Boat Comes In* (1976-1981) – and drama produced in the regions for both local and national audiences.[[8]](#endnote-8) In his 2012 book on regional British television, Cooke concentrates on the latter, with a particular emphasis on Granada Television and the productions of BBC English Regions Drama, which became operational in 1971, just as Hadaway was coming to prominence as a writer. Cooke’s title – *A Sense of Place –* references the ethos of the Birmingham-based head of English Regions Drama, David Rose, concerned with ‘non-metropolitan drama for the national network’.[[9]](#endnote-9) The *BBC Handbook* for 1973 trumpeted the department’s ‘main focus of attention’ as ‘writers who either live in or who have particular concern for the Regions’.[[10]](#endnote-10) For Alan Plater, Rose’s autonomy as producer meant that ‘we got the view of the world as seen by very specific writers in very specific places, such as Tom Hadaway on Tyneside, Alan Bleasdale from Liverpoool, Mike Leigh wandering into Dorset, me writing about Hull, and I can’t remember this happening at any time in television prior to that period or since that period’.[[11]](#endnote-11) Television historians have argued for a sense that emerges of a ‘shared aesthetic under Rose, a rich regional culture […] comparable with regional cinema culture’. [[12]](#endnote-12) However, Hadaway’s output tends not to be mentioned in accounts of the regional extensions of the period for the simple reason that the majority was actually produced centrally by the BBC. One exception was his contribution to *Second City Firsts* (1973-78), a strand overseen by the English Regions department that provided ‘a televisual forum for regional writers, many of them writing for television for the first time’.[[13]](#endnote-13) Yet, by the time that Hadaway’s piece was broadcast, his ‘apprenticeship’ period was well over. As I shall discuss, though, Hadaway’s inability to revive his television writing career in the 1990s was an indication of the structural and cultural shifts in broadcasting that had taken place in the intervening years.

**The rough lad from North Shields**

Adopted as a child, Hadaway was born in 1923 in North Shields, and schooled on the Ridges estate, built to re-house slum dwellers; the Ridges was formally renamed Meadow Well in the 1960s in an effort to alleviate its reputation for deprivation, and came to national prominence following riots in September 1991. On the north bank of the Tyne, about eight miles from the city of Newcastle upon Tyne, North Shields has long carried associations with the fishing industry.[[14]](#endnote-14) As the narrator of *Fair Do’s* (1977) explains, the ‘sheil’ is the ‘Vikin’ term for shelter: so are the rude dwellin’s above, an’ below the Tyne’s mooth, still caaled the North, an’ the Sooth Shiels’.[[15]](#endnote-15)

Leaving school at fourteen, Hadaway worked on the fish quay, where he discovered a ‘rich vein of life in the people who lived and worked in the streets around me: colliers, fishermen and seamen’.[[16]](#endnote-16) He spent the majority of his working life as a self-employed fish merchant, retiring in 1983. He would populate his writing with the characters that had made an impression upon him: ‘all the people I have ever met are in my plays’.[[17]](#endnote-17) This self-described ‘rough lad’ had never been south of the river Tyne when he joined the Royal Navy at eighteen, and would remain based in the region until his death.[[18]](#endnote-18) It was not until he was in his forties that Hadaway found a professional outlet for his ‘jottings’. Accounts of his initial creative outputs are sketchy, but his first publication was a story based upon an incident witnessed on the fish quay: the rescue of a struggling porpoise landed by a crew. According to Hadaway, his letter on the subject was published in *The Guardian* newspaper, which was read by the Scottish (but at the time Northumberland-based) playwright C. P. Taylor.[[19]](#endnote-19) One of the leading writers of the era, Taylor also ‘played a significant role in shaping the dynamic artistic and literary scene that was fast developing in the North East of England during the late 1970s and early 1980s’; in 1974 he established the Northern Playwrights Society to promote and support writers in the region. Legend has it that Taylor pushed a letter through the door of Hadaway’s shop encouraging him to attend his writers’ workshop meetings in nearby Wallsend.[[20]](#endnote-20) Following a mixed-media workshop showcase of 1970, Hadaway’s first major performed work was the historical story *A Quaker in Cullercoats*, performed in 1974 at the People’s Theatre, an amateur theatre group in Newcastle.[[21]](#endnote-21) Hadaway took a scathing review of this ambitious play – he was deemed to be painting ‘with oils when he has not yet mastered crayons’ – to heart, and subsequent work not only demonstrates the impact of his mentor Taylor’s advice to ‘write from your own back yard’, but also the skill of the miniaturist in conveying economic and social realities through plausible characterisation.[[22]](#endnote-22) An obvious move for Hadaway might have been to produce work for Tyne Tees, the regional ITV station. However, as Natasha Vall observes, Tyne Tees did produce some programmes that harnessed the ‘strong history of dialect humour’, but unlike Granada – which ‘helped to shape the image of the north in the popular imagination during the 1960s’ with programmes such as *Z Cars* (1962-78) and *Coronation Street* (1960-) – it was proving unwilling to ‘look beyond material considerations to harness indigenous creativity’; the consequence has arguably been a limited televisual representation of the North East.[[23]](#endnote-23) Fortuitously for Hadaway, his writing talents would chime with opportunities now available at the BBC for untested writers with a strong ‘sense of place’.

In the 1970s, Hadaway was quickly able to reach a national television audience via seven individual dramas – all commissioned by the BBC for different anthology series, and (with one exception) of thirty minutes length or less – and one episode of a continuing drama. Alan Plater cites *God Bless Thee Jacky Maddison* as an example of a programme made under conditions that would quickly no longer apply: ie. the leeway given to new writers to explore relatively esoteric or personal material, without having to tailor to the expectations of genre.[[24]](#endnote-24) In a similar vein, Lez Cooke refers to the *Second City Firsts* strand, produced by the BBC’s English Regions drama department, as indicative of increasing opportunities to ‘experiment and to have original work produced, rather than having to conform to the more formulaic strictures of the continuous drama serial’.[[25]](#endnote-25) On the one hand, the lack of single-authored series credits goes some way to explaining Hadaway’s invisibility in histories of British television drama; a cursory assessment might be that of a hobbyist writer never quite escaping the ‘nursery slopes’. On the other hand, it is precisely the opportunities given during the 1970s to writers such as Hadaway that allows his accent to ring sharply through a small yet thematically consistent body of work.

***The Filleting Machine* and vernacular drama**

Hadaway’s first work for television was the one-act play *The Filleting Machine* in 1973. Set in a family home on the Ridges estate, the action of the play concerns a manual fish filleter confronted with the news that his teenage son has found unskilled employment working a ‘filleting machine’. It is arguably Hadaway’s signature and best-known play: two further adaptations would be made for radio and film/television, and it has subsequently been published in three anthologies. As with all of Hadaway’s writing, it draws from his own working life and history, in this case, a ‘pal’ he met on the fish quay who was the inspiration for the Da character’s attitude towards his wife’s advocacy of education as a means of social betterment: ‘It’s no good ti the workin’ class. Thor’s two kinds of education. The kind the give ti us, and the kind the keep for thorselves. An’ the kind the give ti us, or better off withoot’.[[26]](#endnote-26) The play is even-handed in its sympathy for its four characters: there is pathos in the drunken, bellicose, knife-waving Da’s symbolic emasculation, but compassion for his long-suffering wife and her hopes for her children to escape their tainted reputation as Ridges inhabitants, whether through legitimate office work, in the case of Davey, or something more creative, in the case of Alice. These encounters do not merely capture the ‘political gear change’ whereby ‘new labour challenges the old’, but engage with its implications for gender politics in a way that anticipates a great deal of British ‘realist’ television and cinema from the period onwards. [[27]](#endnote-27)

*The Filleting Machine* is also double-edged in its use and appraisal of Tyneside vernacular speech. Hadaway’s scripts are consistently written phonetically, and rich in ‘community short-hand’: according to Hadaway, as a ‘language within a language’, dialect is a tool to capture ‘spontaneity; [it is] direct, forceful and expressive’.[[28]](#endnote-28) In an essay on ‘comic dialect’, Hadaway acknowledged the comedic possibilities of vernacular speech, whether for a knowing local audience, or for the outsider, but also the potential impediments for comprehension; he cites *God Bless Thee Jackie Madison* bemusing judges at the Monte Carlo International Festival with its ‘rugged’, un-translatable dialogue.[[29]](#endnote-29) Such tensions are succinctly dealt with in *The Filletting Machine*, via Ma’s insistence that her son refers to ‘school’ not ‘skule’, but also Da’s claim that his life and experiences defy any method of mediation: ‘Now, that’s what ye call work. Not a writer born, can write than down’.[[30]](#endnote-30)

It is open to speculation how British viewers would have processed the formidably authentic Tyneside accents in the 1973 broadcast of *The Filleting Machine*, although, as mentioned earlier, the BBC audience reports for two later Hadaway dramas indicate problems of incomprehensibility for some viewers. However, these same comments also suggest how dialect, location and performance style would combine to signify a sense of ‘realism’ for audiences; for *God Bless Thee Jacky Madison*, ‘the settings – cold, bleak – the clothes – dark and poor – the faces – drawn, serious – all helped to make the play most authentic’, whilst some respondents to *The Happy Hunting Ground* praised the ‘lovely authenticity’ of the accents in tandem with the ‘excellent’ dockside setting – ‘one could almost smell the sea’.[[31]](#endnote-31)

Although audiences may well have been accustomed to representations of a generic ‘northern’ landscape (for example, via the ‘kitchen sink’ films of the cinematic New Wave or the soap opera *Coronation Street*), or the cadences of northern comedians, the North East of England was still ‘a largely unexplored patch within the larger landscape of the fictional “North”’.[[32]](#endnote-32) As Dave Russell observes, the area had ‘largely missed out on the earlier moments of northern cultural discovery’.[[33]](#endnote-33) Alan Plater makes the case for the 1969 BBC adaptation of *Close the Coalhouse Door* – initially staged in a Newcastle theatre – being one of the first networked dramas ‘written and played in full-blooded North East accents’.[[34]](#endnote-34) If *The Likely Lads* (1964-6) and its sequel *Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads* (1973-4), co-written by the Tyneside-born Ian La Frenais, had laid a ‘foundation’, the historical drama *When the Boat Comes In* was arguably the first programme to be ‘firmly built on it’, generating popular notions of North East England as being both an exemplar of ‘classic northern/working-class values’, yet retaining a certain exoticism and individuality.[[35]](#endnote-35)

*The Filleting Machine* was first broadcast, as a studio performance, as part of *Full House* (1972-3), a weekly ‘anthology programme ranging across the whole field of contemporary arts’, shown on Saturday nights on BBC2, and placing emphasis on live events.[[36]](#endnote-36) *Full House* ‘exemplified the spirit of early 1970s fringe culture’, particularly the rise of independent, oppositional and experimental theatre companies.[[37]](#endnote-37) Most editions were made from BBC Television Centre in London, but the show’s occasional move to provincial venues was in ‘keeping with the fringe ideal of touring the regions’, including non-theatrical community spaces; this also demonstrates the symbiosis at the time between regional theatre cultures and BBC drama production.[[38]](#endnote-38) Indeed, there had been a ‘Tyneside’ edition broadcast on 9 December 1972 featuring regional writers and performances, and it is likely that Hadaway’s script was commissioned via this connection. According to Hadaway, his script had been sent by his ‘mentor’ C. P. Taylor to a friend called ‘Naomi Jacobs’ (in all likelihood a misremembering of Naomi Capon, one of the producers), who was looking for a potential replacement in a future edition for a unsatisfactory play by fellow North-Easterner Peter Terson.[[39]](#endnote-39)

This particular edition of the programme, which went out on 17 March 1973, saw Hadaway’s play taking second place on a mixed bill that included ‘Afro-rock’ musicians, ballet dancers emulating football moves, a poetry reading on the theme of homelessness, a piano duet by Olivier Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod, and comedic interventions by Michael Palin and John Bird. Although in some respects an accident of scheduling, the placement of Hadaway’s play within the context of such culturally eclectic endeavours creates some interesting tensions, particularly given its downbeat closing suggestion that the teenage Alice’s ‘considerable aptitude’ for music is unlikely to find an outlet, despite her mother’s offer to find part-time work to finance the renting of a piano. Ma has the final word: ‘ […] when ye hev summick inside ye, ye hev to do somethin’ about it. ‘Cos it’s always like waitin’, wantin’ ti be brought out into the light’.[[40]](#endnote-40) However, Hadaway’s directions convey that Alice does ‘not believe anything’, and she turns on the radio, escaping into silence.[[41]](#endnote-41) The broadcast emphasises the tragedy of Alice’s passivity as the defining image of the play through a zoom and extreme close-up of the actor’s face, a tense moment broken only by the audience applause. For Lee Hall, this depiction of a young woman who prefers to listen to music rather than create her own is highly poignant in a play ‘which so brilliantly finds music in the speech of ordinary people’.[[42]](#endnote-42)

The performance is bookended by some significant comments by the show’s presenter, Joe Melia, which anchor it geographically, and emphasise the mutual authenticity of playwright and cast:

Hadaway is a writer from the North East who’s had two or three plays written and performed in the theatre. But tonight is his television debut. The play is called *The Filleting Machine* and is about life as it really is lived in a North East fishing town. Tom Hadaway knows this life from his personal experience, and, actually, you should have seen him in the rehearsal, wielding the filleting knife!

Of course, a studio production, without recourse to location shooting, has to rely on signifiers such as accent, geographical reference, and the kind of contextual information supplied by the host here, to corroborate a sense of place. Interestingly, this performance seems to make reference to the ‘Bridges’ rather than the real-life ‘Ridges’ estate, suggesting a nervousness about tarnishing the reputation of an area becoming a byword for deprivation. After the actors have taken a bow, Melia notes that this had been the television debut of the two youngest cast members; one was due to sit an exam the following day, and the other had given up a job as a van driver – in other words, their parts were not a million miles away from their own experience. But if Melia’s jokey reference to the cast going ‘back to Geordie-land next week’ carries the idea of the segment compartmentalised from the show’s mostly metropolitan pleasures, one telling residue ‘spills’ into the remainder of the broadcast: the set is later re-used for a poetry reading, with performers sitting at a ‘dining table’ still decked with the dirty remnants of a family meal, which includes a prominently placed bottle of Newcastle Brown Ale.

Following this broadcast,Hadaway was given various writing opportunities for the BBC: *God Bless Thee Jacky Maddison* was commissioned in summer 1973 for BBC2’s *Thirty Minute Theatre* (1965-73)series, but was broadcast in 1974 as the seventh entry in the *Centre Play* (1973-7) anthology strand.[[43]](#endnote-43) By then, Hadaway had been drawn into writing for the prestigious and popular historical drama *When the Boat Comes In*, his episode airing in 1976, the same year as his *Play for Today*. These commissions demonstrate the acceleration of Hadaway’s talent for crafting personal knowledge and experience into tight dramatic structures.

**1974-6: Early Success**

Set in Northumberland, 1905, and shot entirely on film, *God Bless Thee Jacky Maddison* uses the story of a thwarted romance between a ‘pit yakker’ and a ‘fishwife’ to explore the chasm of cultural difference between neighbouring working communities, but also the ways that landscape and work define behaviour and perspective. Jacky was based on a miner from Durham who lived with Hadaway’s adoptive family. As with his play’s namesake, this miner had courted a fisher-girl who rejected him, and then rebuffed him again after being widowed. In keeping with the period setting, Hadaway’s dialogue here is more archaic and lyrical than the almost brutally demotic *Filleting Machine*, but is no less vernacular. Yet *God Bless Thee* is as much remarkable for its visual shorthand – much of which should be credited to its director, Jack Gold. In remembrance of a man who would ‘walk me through the fields to the coast and tell me tales’, *God Bless Thee* describes the titular character’s hopeful Sunday morning stroll away from his mining village to the strikingly elemental coastal setting where Ann and her young daughter Sarah are toiling in preparation for the return of their husbands from the sea.[[44]](#endnote-44) It is a journey that takes the sprightly Jacky – still in his ‘Chapel claes’ – through his allotment and then through a grave-yard, past a fog-cloaked stately home, via woodland and dunes until a cliff-top vantage point allows him to identify Ann and Sarah dredging for mussels. [[45]](#endnote-45) When they approach to speak, they are initially framed facing each other on opposite sides of a flat rock. Rebuffed, Jacky approaches the priest who serves the fishing community with a proposition that he hopes will help him win Ann’s hand: ‘Gan to her, an’ tell her A’ll torn’, ie. change his faith. In Hadaway’s original script, the long negotiation between Jacky and the priest – the central plank of the play – takes place inside the priest’s house, but the television version wisely relocates it to the edge of church grounds on a wind-blown cliff overlooking the wave-crashed rocks where the fishing folk work and live. Against this backdrop, the priest’s warnings about the community’s insularity, the strength of their women, and their expectations for widows to carry on family work, speak profoundly about a people, in the words of one of Hadaway’s scene descriptions, ‘in tune with life at the elemental level of growth’. Similarly, the ensuing encounters between Jacky, Ann, and the womenfolk who form a protective veil around them, are dominated by a series of evocative images: Ann dropping Jacky’s flowers upon hearing of the return of the fishermen – ‘it’s boats ahoy, Jacky’ – and Jacky’s point-of-view shot of the women, and the priest, scrambling ashore to reach the boats’ ropes, before he makes his backward journey home, with the mine-head on the horizon, as a traditional folksong on the Northumbrian pipes is played on the soundtrack.[[46]](#endnote-46)

In structuring the play as a journey to and from the coast, Hadaway emphasises the strangeness and impenetrability of the fishing community. Although both the mining and fishing people are subject to tragic accidents, they are commemorated differently. Jacky’s travels take him past a graveyard where he reverentially considers the list of Maddisons engraved on a memorial to a pit accident, but this formalised mode of grief contrasts with Ann’s evocative description of her very landscape as a ‘sorrowin’ place’ with the ‘sands streaked wi’ the tears weepin’; Ann lost her husband and family in ‘one tumblin’ of a coble not a hundred yards from the tips o’ me fingers’.[[47]](#endnote-47) Jacky tells off his brother for disturbing a ‘nesting bird’ at their allotment, going on to note how this thrush – ‘a lovely creature’ – will ‘suffer nee blackbirds nosin’ round’; the animalistic metaphor seems appropriate, given Jacky’s history of being ‘hoyed over a cliff’ by the angry fisherfolk.

Hadaway’s next broadcast was a single 1976 episode of *When the Boat Comes In*. The programme was overseen by James Mitchell, who drew upon his background in South Shields to create a drama exploring the political and cultural history of ‘Gallowshields’, a fictional Tyneside town, in the era between the first and second world wars. The programme gained distinction from other historical dramas from its ‘authentic depiction of Tyneside culture of the 1920s’, which derived partly from the deployment of local actors and settings, but also from the involvement of Hadaway, Sid Chaplin and Alex Glasgow, chosen to write some episodes for the initial series for ‘their commitment to the region rather than their minimal experience of writing for television’.[[48]](#endnote-48) Hadaway’s episode, with the early working title ‘Young Harry’, was originally to be the ninth in the series, but during pre-production was brought forward to be the second, retitled ‘Say Hello… Say Tirra’.[[49]](#endnote-49) Although the episode does progress elements of the series’ overarching plot concerning the demobbed Jack Ford’s entanglement with the Seaton family – specifically his courtship of the school-teacher Jessie, and the family’s involvement with political movements in the town – it also functions to some degree as a ‘standalone’ episode, with a self-contained story about an orphaned boy, Harry, who is cared for by the family matriarch, Bella Seaton, but eventually sent against her will to a farm school in Australia. Hadaway again draws from personal experience, not only from his own early years as an orphan, but his recollection of fellow children between four and fourteen being sent to the colonies through the Child Migrant Scheme, a practice that occurred up to 1967, and which happened to his own twelve-year-old foster-brother in 1926. That boy, named Harry Scadden, and the clear inspiration for the character in ‘Say Hello’, had been given up at birth by his actress mother, who gave permission for his deportation to Western Australia. In 1991 Hadaway went to Australia to carry out research for a mini-series on the subject, which he described as a celebration of his foster-mother Mabel, who ‘never stopped mourning for her lost boy’.[[50]](#endnote-50)

In ‘Say Hello…’, Hadaway skilfully places the story of Harry’s short-lived incorporation into the Seaton family in counterpoint with that of the Seaton family’s engagement with political action, so as to raise questions about family, charity and the efficacy of formal protest. The episode begins with scenes juxtaposing Bella Seaton, the mother of three grown-up children, taking in a young boy whose mother has suddenly died leaving him without family, and the menfolk of Gallowhsields’ Labour Party and Worker’s Council debating how to pressurise the authorities into greater assistance for the needy. This immediate tension between conceptions of helping one’s fellow man underpins most of the episode’s subsequent action and dialogue. Bella’s prioritising of Harry’s wellbeing over that of her family is rationalised as the manifestation of a maternal instinct to protect this cowering, near-mute innocent. Her daughter Jessie is unsupportive, in line with her forward-looking political stance – shared with her father – that a ‘cure’ rather than mere ‘relief’ should be found for social ills, and that commitment is necessary above a mere ‘voluntary gesture’. Jessie’s irritation with colloquial expressions, together with her own profession as teacher (denounced by her brother at one point as not deserving of the word ‘work’) plays into Hadaway’s hands as an advocate for vernacular expression. One can certainly hear Hadaway’s voice in Jack’s response to her criticism of his use of the word ‘bullet’ (for sweets) as not being the ‘King’s English’: ‘You and the King can call them sweets; we’ll stick to the rich heritage’. The episode ends with the traumatic separation of Tommy and his ‘Auntie Bella’. Through the intervention of Harry’s priest, who patronises and disarms Bill Seaton with suggestions that socialism and organised religion both seek the ‘subordination of the individual to the greater good’, the young Harry is given a dehumanising paper label and sent away from the country. As the train departs, the chants of gathering, off-screen protestors are heard: to the coldly rational priest, it is a ‘mob’ and not a ‘proper way to solve a problem’; to the empathetic Bella, it is the sound of ‘people crying out’.

There was public controversy when Hadaway, along with fellow Tynesiders Sid Chaplin and Alex Glasgow, was not invited to contribute to the subsequent two series of *When the Boat Comes In*. Hadaway complained to the local press not only about the ‘re-writing’ of his script, but about the missed opportunity of a show now reaching more than 15 million viewers: ‘It just scratches the surface. There should be some reaching out for something more native. The series lacks true drama’.[[51]](#endnote-51) The affair, described as ‘one of the major internal BBC disputes of recent times’, was later covered in an article written by Alan Plater (anonymously) for *Private Eye* magazine, and explained as an usurpation of the original producer Leonard Lewis’s vision of the show by a deal between its main writer James Mitchell and the BBC’s Head of Service.[[52]](#endnote-52) Lewis and the script-editor William Humble seemingly resigned from the show because of the decision not to involve Hadaway and the other writers. A sympathetic account in the *Sunday Times* lamented this, noting that the ‘the standard achieved by that co-operative of regional talent far exceeded ITV’s anachronistic *Days of Hope* [sic: it was actually the BBC], on a similar theme’.[[53]](#endnote-53) In his role as President of the Association of Directors and Producers, Piers Haggard wrote a letter to the *Guardian* criticising BBC management’s heavy-handed reprimanding of Lewis for ‘interference in what he considered a traditional area of producer’s responsibility, namely choice of writers’.[[54]](#endnote-54) In 1979, the BBC dropped the six episodes by Chaplin, Glasgow and Hadaway from a repeat run of the programme, explained in public statements by the BBC (and also in private correspondence between Lewis and the BBC Director-General) as bound up with ‘contractual’ issues, and justified by their late addition to the original series causing them not to ‘fit with the rest of the episodes’.[[55]](#endnote-55) Whether or not this was a snub (as the writers believed), or a matter of internal politics, it went to prove that ‘Tyneside, nostalgia style, is much too important to be entrusted to native Geordies’.[[56]](#endnote-56)

Hadaway’s 1976 contribution to *Play for Today* is arguably the pinnacle of his television career, certainly in terms of authorial prestige. His response to being given a larger canvass (seventy minutes length) was to narrow his scope to the one location he was most familiar with: the North Shields fish quay. The story of Bob, a ‘dynamic’ young man with ‘great flair and a certain brashness’ charming his way into the employment of the successful but principled middle-aged fish-merchant Brown (and almost cuckolding his wife), *The Happy Hunting Ground* never strays from the quay, confining its action to the merchant’s buildings, the quay, its fish-market, the local ‘boozer’ and the interior of Brown’s office: the one exception being the interior of a hospital where Brown is confined after an injury, which gives scope for Bob’s courtship of his wife.[[57]](#endnote-57) Hadaway’s opening descriptions of the setting in his screenplay – ‘Early morning. The Waterfront ablaze with artificial light. The Eastern horizon begins to unfold a new day’ – emphasise his conception of the quayside as stage encompassing all human emotion and behaviour: from lust, dishonesty, theft and betrayal, to aspiration, loyalty and integrity. The play begins and ends with ‘bird’s eye views’ of the fishing port from vantage points rather ineffectively patrolled by policemen scoping out ‘fiddles’ (bribes and barters). The quay has its own codes and rituals: for example, office-based women like Jenny are made uncomfortable when they cross into the fish market, and even fellow workers who are suspicious of Bob’s fiddling and criminal past refuse to tell on him. Here, forces of the law have little relevance: a ‘snoop’ photographer trying to document evidence of unemployment benefit claimants working casually is pelted with fish and driven away.

In both its depiction of a virile man seducing his way to success, and its evocation of a hierarchical topography, the drama has much in common with John Braine’s *Room at the Top*, an important book (1957), and then film (1959), within the late 1950s wave of ‘Angry Young Men’ literature. Alone upstairs in Brown’s office, Bob confides to Jenny about his father’s grim-sounding job in a fishmeal factory, and his own aspirations for ‘one o’ them posh hooses on the Grange Estate: ye knaa, wi’ the winders an’ the speedboat on the path’. When Jenny, who he describes to her face as having ‘real class’, reveals that she has such a home, he confronts her with the implication that her marriage was a kind of trading: ‘Life’s all dealin’ isn’t it?’ But fortune and reputation in the ‘bloody fish trade’, as Brown calls it, are easily reversed: although Brown maintains that the trade has ‘no shortcuts’, the name of a proprietor on a shop sign is, according to Bob, easily dealt with a ‘small tin of gloss, and it’s all blotted out’. As the initially naïve Brown comes to realise, when Bob finally opens up his own neighbouring shop in competition, drawing from the contacts gleaned from working under Brown, the fish trade is ‘not about morality, it’s about survival’. Yet in this Darwinian environment there is still space for integrity and wisdom, as evidenced by Bob’s slower-witted ‘bruiser’ brother Joe, who reflects that the ‘fish’ll not hang around until you’ve all stopped arguing on’.

**1979-80: Short Plays**

Following *The Happy Hunting Ground*, plans for further longer-form writing did not bear fruit. Hadaway delivered a play in 1976 on the topic of Pocahontas, and was commissioned the following year to write *Come and Join Us* for *Play of the Week* (1977-80), about a ‘fishquay girl with natural talent’ who is ‘taken up by a local theatre group with resultant clash of values’.[[58]](#endnote-58) The failure of these and other projects might well be considered a disappointment, particularly given that the four short pieces (all about thirty minutes) he produced between 1977 and 1979 point to a writer confidently toying with the possibilities of story-telling, and also making imaginative leaps beyond the generally masculine (and indeed white) viewpoints of previous work.

Of the four, *The Lady Irene* (1978) is the most formally conservative, being a studio-filmed, real-time drama using the single setting of a North Shields flat belonging to Irene, a young mother having an affair with Bob, a successful yet unhappily married fish-merchant with a ‘fleet of boats’. ‘Stuck all week in a bloody fishhouse’, Irene delights in the sexual hold she has over the older Bob, as well as the material trappings of their relationship: the play begins with the suggestive image of Irene in her kitchen expertly preparing a fish fillet whilst dressed in a fur coat Bob has bought. Bob himself could be an older, wiser version of his namesake in *The* *Happy Hunting Ground*: materially successful, but unfulfilled by his ‘tidy’ wife, and haunted by the stigma of his humble origins. The play falls short of fully celebrating Irene’s agency and self-preservation instincts, however, by ending with the return – after a mysterious eight-month absence – of her brutish husband, who sends Bob away and assaults her. Nevertheless, the drama concludes with the bloodied Irene being tended to by her neighbour, who tells a blackly amusing anecdote about her own husband’s violence: ‘that’s it, have a laugh, make the best of it, that’s all we can do’.

Commissioned for the BBC’s schools social science strand *Scene* (1968-2002), *Justice: Uncle Sangi* (1979) is structured around a child’smoral dilemma – about whether the putting down of a family dog will serve a greatergood – with clear applications for classroom discussions, but Hadaway uses its Punjabi characters to nuance his documentation of the communities of the North Shields area. The teenage Sharm, to whom the Geordie vernacular comes naturally, is at odds with both his family – his cautious, conservative, shopkeeper father who refuses to be called ‘Da’, in the native fashion – and the wider community; a neighbour calls him a ‘damn Paki’, and he is uncomfortable joining in with a football game on the street, or wearing a turban in public. He is drawn to the tales and philosophising of his uncle Sangi, a ‘jack of all trades’ and perpetual traveller, for whom the ships on the Tyne are a symbol of ‘all the places you can go in the world anytime’. When an altercation between Sharm’s dog and a racist neighbour leads to police intervention, his father and his brother quarrel, not just over the fate of the dog, but their respective definitions of justice and their varying expectations of respect from the local community: for Sangi, ‘an Englishman may hate your guts, but he’ll still give you a place in the queue’. A dilemma is reached for Sharm when it becomes clear that only a witness statement from his uncle will protect the dog, but that would lead to his exposure as an illegal immigrant: in the bleak final scene he takes matters into his own hands and shoots it on a patch of industrial land overlooked by the Tyne shipyards.

A paean to the loyalty and endurance of the Cullercoats fisherwomen – ‘marvellous creatures’ – written for the *Sea Tales* strand, *Fair* *Do’s* tells of Mary Haslem, isolated from her insular community for marrying a Whitby-born ship-wright.[[59]](#endnote-59) The story of Mary’s moral victory over a ship’s chandler, who refuses to honour a deal struck over the ownership of her late husband’s coble, is told almost exclusively via a voice-over in what a version of the script calls ‘Northumbrian brogue’ by Hadaway himself.[[60]](#endnote-60) In combination with the stark, elemental setting of a barren patch of coast, and the use of (occasionally modernised) folk music on the soundtrack, Hadaway’s lyrical writing gives its subject the quality of a folk-tale celebrating a dying breed of unique women with the ‘economic life of a community […] harnessed to their backs’. In reference to the original deal between her husband and the chandler to go ‘fifty-fifty, fair do’s’ on the cost and profits of the boat, the ‘marvellously determined’ Mary obstinately refuses his offer, instead removing her rightful half of the coble and using it to strengthen her ill-roofed shelter on the beach; as Hadaway’s narrator concludes, ‘those that think a woman cannot do a man’s work should bring themselves up here. But when they’re gone, we’ll never see their likes again, more’s the pity’.

With no small irony, Hadaway himself became embroiled in a dispute over his payment for the writing of *Fair Do’s*, which was indeed disproportionately less than for his other commissions. In a letter to the copyright department, he describes the fee as ‘derisory’, considering the ‘four weeks’ worth of writing and research:

The way I look at it is, original, source material is the blood supply of the whole organisation, and every one in the BBC, from the office boy to the top director, exists because of it. Unfortunately, money is the token of society’s honour, and I don’t see why the creative writer, the blood donor, should get less than the office boy.[[61]](#endnote-61)

Noting the change of the title from the aptly named ‘The Bargain’ to the resonant *Fair Do’s*, Hadaway suggested that unless his fee was increased, he would require the BBC to donate it directly to the Dr Bernado’s charity, which is what subsequently happened, as well as his waiving away of repeat fee rights (a factor that may not be unrelated to it being given, rare among Hadaway’s work, a repeat BBC screening in 1983). In the spirit of fairness, when Hadaway was offered a substantially higher fee for a later commission, he was quick to express thanks: ‘Positively generous this time, almost embarrassing. But I won’t be ungracious, and say it’s too much’.[[62]](#endnote-62)

Hadaway’s last major commission for the BBC, *May Blossoms* (1979) – his contribution to *Turning Year Tales* (1979) – happens to be his most idiosyncratic piece of writing, a fast-edited, near-absurdist yarn, again narrated by Hadaway himself, about a blind woman kicking against the attempts of the ‘welfare office’ to position her in a care home following the demolition of her squalid terrace house. Evolving out of one of Hadaway’s first produced works of theatre, almost a decade previously, *May Blossoms* offers another of his zestful heroines, Blind May, ‘seventy years of age, terrible in rage’. Her story is told through Hadaway’s incongruously mellifluous narration:

Blind May, the unsalted, only daughter of a shipping grocer, had known better times. Childhood, and her father’s house. Once full of yarn swopping, cribbage playing, ale-supping merchant seamen. Captains, and stewards, black-bearded, red-bearded, crinkly haired and handsome men, with strong comfortable brown arms, and given to great gales of laughter. Good men. Bold men, real Tynesiders, place-dropping lovely, romantic names like Colombo, Durban, and Valparaiso.

Hadaway’s sardonic voice-over alternates between lofty detachment and sarcastic commentary on the motives of the ‘angelic’ members of the social services, similarly heard but not seen; at times the diegesis is further complicated by his and May’s interruption of each other. Whereas the Amber collective – shortly to be key collaborators with Hadaway, as I will discuss – would fashion similar material, in films such as *Byker* (1983), into nostalgic reflections on the negative impact of slum-clearance projects on community identity, *May Blossoms* takes a more fanciful and exaggerated, if no less passionate stance. Continuing the bird and animal imagery ever present in Hadaway’s writing, the irascible May is associated with a black leghorn cockerel, who seems to die and be reborn as the story unfolds. Her home flattened, May cuts a submissive, pathetic creature in the supernaturally gleaming Sycamores Home, but she is then seemingly reunited with a lost lover of her youth (named Robert Maddison, a clear nod to one of Hadaway’s previous plays), and is last seen marrying him and entering a local pub to celebrate. The final image shows a red-haired angel with flowing white robes observing the action, the Tyne river and shipyards behind her: ‘I find it so helpful to close my eyes when I wish to think clearly’, she considers, but the ‘final triumphant word’ comes from the resurrected cockerel. Light years away from the ‘kitchen-sink’ naturalism of *The Filleting Machine*, *May Blossoms* is as defiantly individual as its heroine, and hints towards possible future strategies of socially-informed yet self-reflexive writing that moves beyond traditional modes of ‘realist’ form and representation; Alan Plater recalled Hadaway’s response to complaints that his writing did not quite capture how ‘real’ people on a North Shields fish quay might speak: ‘But that’s what they want to say, and I help them to say it’.[[63]](#endnote-63)

**1980 to 2005: Away from television**

From the 1980s onwards,Hadaway saw no further substantial television projects come to fruition, not counting some short films produced by Denis Mitchell based upon personal anecdotes.[[64]](#endnote-64) By the early 1980s, he had become absorbed into the operations of the Amber film and photography group, a Newcastle-based collective of artists and film-makers who had been documenting the industrial and post-industrial landscape and communities of north-east England since the late 1960s. Amber’s film of *The Filleting Machine* (1981) was the collective’s first fully dramatic work, although Amber had been involved with the Live Theatre’s touring version of the play among working men’s clubs in the mid 1970s. Amber’s Murray Martin has claimed that Hadaway’s one-act play *The Pigeon Man*, originally performed in 1974, was written as a film script for Amber.[[65]](#endnote-65) In the late 1970s there were also plans by Amber for an animation based on Hadaway’s short tale ‘The One That Never Got Away’.[[66]](#endnote-66) Hadaway himself took the role of the father in Amber’s version of *The Filleting Machine*, which was fleshed out for its broadcast by Channel 4 by ‘contextual’ material, including documentary footage of Hadaway at work on the quayside, the actors fielding questions in character from a school class, and audiences commenting on the veracity of the play. For the rest of the decade, Hadaway took the (informal and uncredited) role as writer-in-residence, including screenplays for Amber’s feature films *Seacoal* (1985) and *In Fading Light* (1989), by which time Amber had begun a period of community residency in his native North Shields. In many respects, Hadaway’s creative approach of dramatizing actuality made a good fit with Amber’s political and aesthetic commitment to producing fiction rooted in particular communities. *In Fading Light*, in particular, draws upon Hadaway’s knowledge of the people, frictions and superstitions of the North Shields fishing industry, as well as exploring concerns about over-fishing that were also dealt with his near-contemporaneous stage-play *The Long Line* (1986). Although this was evidently a fulfilling period for Hadaway, as well as opportunity to reach non-indigenous audiences, Amber’s emphasis upon collectivity, and their political sensitivities, caused some challenges for a writer used to the primacy of the authorial voice.

When Hadaway’s involvement with Amber wound down in the late 1980s, he looked once more to television, pitching a number of ideas with a Tyneside flavour. In a 1997 interview, he lamented an increasingly hostile climate for both new and established writers:

There was this golden time in television about 20-25 years ago, when Play for Today and Thirty Minute Theatre were coming out and all sorts of new writers were getting their foot in the door. You had it pretty good. […] I’ve had 4 disappointments in the last year. […] I’ve really been jaded, disenchanted. It’s obvious that I’m not wanted. […] The main thing is the television one, it really hurt me. […] Watching something on television, you think ‘If I’d sent something like that in, I would feel ashamed’. […] It’s so painful, if I was starting now I’d go and get a job in a fish shop. [[67]](#endnote-67)

Hadaway’s melancholic comments follow the pitching of various projects involving regional actors, producers and writers, including a boxing drama for the popular television actor Robson Green. Two projects, *Top Story* and *Now Arriving*, aspired to exploit the dramatic potential of the Tyneside riverscape without succumbing to parochialism or soap-like contrivance. Hadaway’s 1994 pitch for the former, set in a regional TV newsroom, is that we would meet the ‘human precedents to the bland final portrayal of the local news’.[[68]](#endnote-68) Aimed at the Carlton Television drama department in 1993, *Now Arriving* would attempt to breach the ‘insular mould of “soap” and bring about the long-awaited return to a “real” drama series’. Arguing that soap opera settings are ‘separated enclaves of life, visited by events’, bringing about the death of ‘true regionalism’, he explains that the ‘hub of destiny’ in the show will be the Newcastle rail station, transporting natives and outsiders alike into the ‘huge canvas of life we call Tyneside’. Structured as a mosaic of interlinked characters, stories, *Now Arriving* would move beyond the ‘claustrophobic inhibition of bar-room and cul-de-sac and out into the hinterland of real experience’, thus exploiting television’s position ‘halfway between theatre and cinema’. This was certainly an ambitious approach for an era of television drama dominated by genre-based programmes, and where – to Hadaway’s clear irritation – soap operas were now regarded as the last bastion of ‘authentic’ regionalism. The impersonal, hierarchical process of pitching to a network centre was no joy for Hadaway, the antithesis of his previous experiences of working within a mutually supportive creative community.

Particularly disappointing was the failure of *Street Angel*, a mini-series commemorating the unwanted children sent to Australia as part of the Child Migrant Scheme.[[69]](#endnote-69) Intended as a British/Australian co-production, it would expand upon the personal story of Hadaway’s step-brother Harry previously dramatized in his contribution to *When the Boat Comes In*; Hadaway was initially contacted by a producer (Christine Benson, co-director of Blue Heaven Productions) who had recalled that particular episode; he was commissioned to write a two-episode drama for television and spent a month carrying out research in Australia in early 1991. The project stalled in its initial version when a potential overlap was realised with the forthcoming *The Leaving of Liverpool* (1992), a thematically similar mini-series collaboration between the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the BBC.

To end this article on such a note of failure is in many respects unfair to a multifaceted writing career that also encompassed stage plays, radio work and activities generated by an a stint as a prison writer-in-residence. Nevertheless, Hadaway’s career is bookended by success and failure at reaching a national television audience, an evident source of frustration. Yet his body of television work stands as a unique tapestry of autobiographically-informed fiction documenting rapidly vanishing ways of life. It is also a unique product of a particular broadcasting time and climate, when the ‘regional’ could be explored with authenticity and originality.

**Teleography**

All dates are for original broadcast.

*Full House*, BBC2, 17 March 1973.

*God Bless Thee Jacky Maddison* (*Centre Play*), BBC2, 15 July 1974

‘Say Hello… ….Say Tirra’, *When the Boat Comes In*, BBC1, 15 January 1976

*The Happy Hunting Ground* (*Play for Today*), BBC1, 10 February 1976

*Fair Do’s* (*Sea Tales)*, BBC2, 26 May 1977.

*The Lady Irene* (*Second City Firsts)*, BBC2, 22 April 1978.

*Justice: Uncle Sangi (Scene*), BBC1, 1 February 1979.

*May Blossoms* (*Turning Year Tales*), BBC2, 29 July 1979

*The Porpoise (Impressions)*, BBC2, 01 May 1981

*The Old Rectory* *(Impressions*), BBC2, 12 June 1981

*The Filleting Machine* (*Eleventh Hour*), Channel 4, 23 May 1983.

*Uncle George Willy*, Channel 4, 31 August 1986.

*Just a Photograph*, Channel 4,7 September 1986.

**Notes on Contributor**

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1. P. Mortimer, ‘Hadaway – and the talent’s all home grown’, *Evening Chronicle*, 30 September 2003,

   <http://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/whats-on/theatre/hadaway---talents-home-grown-1663813>. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. A. Plater, ‘Obituary: Tom Hadaway’, *The Guardian*, 11 March 2005, http://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/mar/11/guardianobituaries.artsobituaries1. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. BBC Handbook 1977 (London: BBC 1976), 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Of all the Hadaway programmes mentioned in this article, the only Audience Research Reports undertaken by the BBC appear to be for *God Bless Thee Jacky Maddison* (BBC WAC R9 / 7 / 130) and *The Happy Hunting Ground* (BBC WAC R9 / 7 / 139). It is worth noting that the former was estimated as seen by 5.3% of the population, and gained a ‘reaction index’ score of 63, a higher rating than the four previous plays broadcast in the *Centre Play* series, whilst *The Happy Hunting Ground* was estimated as reaching 17.5% of the population, and gained a ‘reaction index’ score of 65, higher than the average (thus far) rating of 57 for that series of *Play for Today*. Reports were undertaken for various episodes of *When the Boat Comes In*, but not for the one written by Hadaway. There are no references to his productions in the corporation’s Reports on Programme Correspondence, again with the exception of general comments on *When the Boat Comes In.* I have not been able to find any correspondence relating to their production or internal reception in the BBC written archives. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See, for example, J. Medhurst, *A History of Independent Television in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010); L. Cooke, *A Sense of Place: Regional British Television Drama, 1956-82* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012); H. Chignell, I. Franklin and K. Skoog (eds), *Regional Aesthetics: Mapping UK Media Cultures* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); and the special issues of *Critical Studies in Television* 10 (3) and *Historical Journal of Film, Television and Radio* 34 (3) considering the ‘production and reception of television space’ (L. Panos, ‘Introduction’, 329 in the latter). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. V. McLane, *Tom Hadaway and Leonard Barras Talk to Val McLane about Playwriting* (Unknown, 2003), 18. Transcript of March 1997 interview. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. P. Hadaway and T. Hadaway, *Tom Hadaway in conversation with his daughter* (Unknown, 2003). Pamphlet produced for the Tom Hadaway Festival of 2003. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. L. Cooke, 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. BBC Handbook 1973 (London: BBC, 1972), 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. A. Plater, ‘On writing, commissioning and genre’, *Pebble Mills Studio Website* (2010), <http://pebblemill.org/blog/alan-plater-on-writing-commissioning-and-genre>. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. |  |
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    | D. Rolinson, ‘“The Surprise of a Large Town”: Depicting Regional Space in Alan Plater’s *Land of Green Ginger*’, *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 4 (2), 285. See also B. Hanson, ‘1970s: Regional Variations’ in J. Bignell and S. Lacey (eds), *British Television Drama: Past, Present and* Future (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; 2nd ed. 2014), 166-171. |
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    [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. L. Cooke, 123. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. For a history of the consolidation of the North East fishing industry around North Shields in the late nineteenth century, see G. J. Milne, *North East England, 1850-1914: The Dynamics of a Maritime-industrial Region* (Woodbridge, 2006). [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. A note on my use of dialect in dialogue transcriptions: where possible I have drawn directly from, or adapted from, published/unpublished scripts, so as to convey the writer’s phonetic instructions. These may pose a challenge to non-UK (and some UK) readers, but I would argue that to ‘translate’ them into standard English is disrespectful to the author’s intentions. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. T. Hadaway, *A Selection* (Unknown, 1996), Author’s Note (n.p.). [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. P. Hadaway and T. Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. J. Diffley, ‘True talent in this rough lad’, *The Evening Chronicle*, 2 February 2005, 26. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. V. McLane, 3. A version of the porpoise story would appear in the ten-minute film *The Porpoise* (1981), produced by Denis Mitchell and shown on the BBC. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. M. Roberts, ‘Preface’ in M. Roberts (ed.), *Live Theatre: Six Plays from the North East* (London: Methuen, 2003), vii; V. McLane, 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Information from Hadaway family archive. Hadaway’s contribution to the 1970 event included poetry, music, and a play about a blind woman which was later refashioned into the television play *May Blossoms*. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. T. Hadaway, *The Long Line* (Cullercoats, 1994), ix. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. N. Vall, *Cultural Region: North East England 1945-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 60; 46. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. A. Plater, ‘The Drama of the North East’ in R. Colls and B. Lancaster (eds), *Geordies: Roots of Regionalism* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Northumbria University Press, 1992; 2nd ed. 2005), 77. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. L. Cooke, 122. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. T. Hadaway, *The Long Line*, 14. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. L. Hall, ‘Introduction’ in M. Roberts, xiv. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. T. Hadaway, ‘Comic Dialect’ in R. Colls and B. Lancaster, 85. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. The *Full House* performance arguably demonstrates this dual address, as there is audible laughter from the audience at various lines that are not obvious candidates for mirth: whether this is ‘knowing’ or ‘uncomfortable’ laughter is open to conjecture; T. Hadaway, ‘Comic Dialect’, 90. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. T. Hadaway, *The Long Line*, 13. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. BBC WAC R9 / 7 / 130 and R9 / 7 / 139. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. D. Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination* (Manchester, 2004), 193; A. Plater, ‘The drama of the North East’, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. D. Russell, 193. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. A. Plater, 76. No recording is known to exist of the broadcast. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. D. Russell, 194-5. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. BBC Handbook 1974(London: BBC, 1973), 26. The rather doleful assessment of the programme in the BBC Handbook is that whilst the ‘experiment may be felt to have been worth making, it would be too much to claim that it had been an unqualified success, and the audience figures, never high, steadily declined’. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. L. Panos and B. Smart (forthcoming), *Space and Place in 1970s Television Studio Drama* (Palgrave Macmillan). I would like to thank Leah Panos for providing me with work-in-progress material from this book. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Panos and Smart ibid; L. Cooke, 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. V. McLane, 16. Hadaway’s contributor files in the BBC Written Archives contain a letter between C. P. Taylor and the BBC Copyright department that indicates Taylor’s involvement in the commissioning and fee arrangement. BBC WAC, RCONT 20 Tom Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. T. Hadaway, *The Long Line*, 24. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid, 24. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. L. Hall, xiv. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. BBC WAC, RCONT 20 Tom Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. T. Hadaway, *A Selection*, Author’s note. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. This and subsequent quotations cited or adapted from scripts in BBC WAC. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. According to Pauline Hadaway, an early version of the script contained a lengthy exchange between the characters that was eventually replaced, at the director Jack Gold’s suggestion, with a succinct image of tossed flowers. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. The Hadaway family archive contains his account (unpublished) of the ‘Hartley Colliery Disaster’ of 1862, which claimed the lives of 204 men and boys, and had been recounted to him as a boy by his ‘Uncle Jack’. Hadaway recalls the director Jack Gold having the Maddison family name superimposed on the memorial, an act of creative license that provided ‘a link between myself, my uncle Jack and a shared historical memory’. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. K. McNally, ‘The Geordie and the American Hero: Revisiting Classic Hollywood Masculinity in *When the Boat Comes In*’, *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 4(1) (2007), 102. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. BBC WAC, RCONT 21 Tom Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. J. Mayman, ‘Sad Saga of the Missing Final Chapter’, *Herald Sun* Weekend Supplement, 2 February 1991, 20. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Cited in M. Currie, ‘Beeb Sinks Three Men in the Boat’, *Evening Chronicle*, 31 May 1976, 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Anon., No Title, *Private Eye*, 15 September 1978, n.p. Archived in Newcastle Library’s Local Collection. Plater’s authorship is revealed in undated correspondence between Plater and Sid Chaplin, held in Sid Chaplin Papers (SCP) at Newcastle University: GB 186 SC / 6 / 2 / 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Anon., ‘Geordian Knot’, *The Sunday Times*, 30 May 1976. SCP: GB 186 SC / 6 / 2 / 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. P. Haggard, ‘Beached by Auntie’, *The Guardian*, 6 October 1976. SCP: GB 186 SC/6/2/12. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Letter between D. B. Mann (Senior Assistant, Secretariat, BBC), 15 September 1978. The Director-General is quoted as saying he has discussed the matter with Ronald Marsh (Head of Series, Drama Television), who explains it as a ‘complicated story involving the BBC’s contractual rights’ and does not involve a ‘ban’ of particular writers. SCP: GB 186 SC / 6 / 2 / 12. See also G. Home, ‘Boat in stormy waters’, 20 September 1979, *Evening Chronicle*, 5. For the latter quotation: Anon., ‘Geordie Jack’s Comeback’, *The Journal*, 30 August 1979, 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. *Private Eye*, n.p. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. References to characters and scenes from script in the Hadaway archive. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Information from correspondence in BBC WAC, RCONT 21 Tom Hadaway and WE 13 / 149 Tom Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Cullercoats gained national fame in the late nineteenth century when it was home to a colony of artists. Its most famous visitor was the American Winslow Homer, who lived there around 1881, and brought international fame to the distinctive clothes and baskets of the Cullercoats fisherwomen. In 1882, Aaron Watson contrasted the cosmopolitanism of the rapidly developing Shields with the pre-industrial appeal of its neighbouring village ‘untouched by the waves of change’, well-known through accounts of the fisherfolk’s ‘quiet heroism’. Cited in L. Newton, ‘Cullercoats: An Alternative North-Eastern Landscape’ in T. Faulkner et al. (eds), *Northern Landscapes* (Woodbridge, 2010), 297-8. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Early version of script accessed from Newcastle City Library’s Local Collection. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Letter to A. Hensler, BBC Copyright Department, 3 October 1976. BBC WAC, RCONT 21 Tom Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Letter to A. Hensler, 29 April 1978. BBC WAC, RCONT 21 Tom Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. D. Rolinson, ‘Interview with Alan Plater’, 3 July 2006, <http://www.britishtelevisiondrama.org.uk/?tag=alan-plater&paged=2> [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. These were *The Porpoise*, *The Old Rectory* (1981), *Uncle George Willy* (1986) and *Just a Photograph* (1986). [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Martin cited in a 2002 interview as part of the British Library’s *Oral History of British Photography*, C459 / 156, part five. Here, he gives an account of Amber’s relationship with Hadaway. During the mid-1970s, Martin took charge of Hadaway’s business, when an injury left him indisposed. It is tempting to see this ‘take over’ as lightly fictionalised in *The Happy Hunting Ground*, which also has its shop proprietor hospitalised. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. T. Hadaway, ‘The One That Never Got Away’, *Iron*, 19 (Dec 1977-Feb 1978), 25-26. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. V. McLane, 28-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Pitch material accessed from the Hadaway family archive, with further information supplied by Pauline Hadaway. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. See J. Mayman, ‘Sad Saga of the Missing Final Chapter’, *Herald Sun* Weekend Supplement, 2 February 1991, 20. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)