

TRIBUTE TO WARWICK BALL

If you feel that you relax too much
And your weight is gaining well;
If you know you're getting out of touch
With the reality that life is hell;
And if nothing interests you at all;
It is time to take a tour with the famous **Warwick Ball**.

The brochures are alluring
But you're dealing with a mind
So skilful in obscuring
The harsher truths – you'll find
That you'll be tempted, and you'll fall
Without knowing what you're in for if you go with
Warwick Ball.

The itinerary gives no details
Of wake-up or starting times
Nor tells you how much walking it entails
Or how long and strenuous are the climbs;
Or that when evening comes and you can hardly crawl,
You've earned a learned talk from **Warwick Ball**.

So, while you rest your lacerated feet
And listen to the master strut his stuff,
You'll grumble when the time has come to eat
And declare that you could never hear enough
From those mills that grind exceeding small
Working in the mind of **Warwick Ball**.

When it's all over and you're heading for your homes
And feeling that you've had enough of sites
And are sick to death of minarets and domes,
Horrendous bathrooms and uncomfortable nights,
You may mutter in some dark departure hall:
"I'm absolutely worn out by **Warwick Ball**."

But next season when you're there again
Champing at the bit, ready to meet the pace,
Longing to be told the what and when
And the wanderings of migrant peoples' trace,
And to re-learn things you knew but can't recall –
You'll thank your lucky stars for **Warwick Ball**.

When at last you know your sun is setting,
And travelling is, sadly, off the list –
It'll be no use regretting
The tours that you have missed.
But the words you will be shouting as you fall
Should be: "**Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!**
Warwick Ball."

JIM ARMITAGE