

The Pax Britannica

Ian Anderson

I came to woo you at behest of
Uncle Leo, did my best
to charm and Hatter, sooth, lay thoughts
of scheming Saxon Prince to rest.
Just seventeen, you were emboldened,
turned away plain Orange boy
and made for me a consort haven
in your heart, haven of joy.

Now Empire spills a growing blot
across the atlas, leaves its mark.
The hands of men in iron ships stoke
their boilers, fan the spark.
Generous in deed and promise, our
emissaries make fair trade
and pay with sovereign Queenly coin for goods
and worldly fortunes made.

We will win them and contain them,
not by Enneld Pattern gun:
no hard coercion, whip or stick but
ten good shillings to be won.
See, we offer contracts clear in
English, plain as it appears
in small print, some trifling matters:
not important, never fear.

Pax Britannica, Pax Britannica, rules
the headland and the wave.
Hansa spirit will enrich us, keep
us from an early grave.
Sweet Victoria, Mother England,
gracious queen whom God will save.

We'll leave them gifts of architecture,
engineering, laws and more.
The willow bat, the bowler hat of
gentlemen who keep the score.
Head-up code of moral conduct,
never minions to deceive.
Straight the ball and, best of all, when
time is come, we take our leave.

Pax Britannica, Pax Britannica, rules
the headland and the wave.
Hansa spirit will enrich us, keep
us from an early grave.
My sweet Victoria, your dearest Albert;
two ledger lines above the stave.