

~~LONG AGO AND~~

~~NOT SO FAR AWAY~~

Scripts & Talks

---







NEVER THE TWAIN?

O Boyle to camera

I am an Ulsterman. You'd know that by my way of talking. Even if I were speaking in Irish you would notice how different my language is from the Gaoluinn of the Munsterman, or from the tongue of my next door neighbour from Connacht. I have been teaching this Ulster Irish of mine for upwards of forty years in St. Patrick's College, Armagh, under the auspices of the Northern Ireland Ministry of Education and in recent years I have taken most pleasure from that part of the Official Syllabus which invites me to teach the Gaelic Poetry of the eighteenth century. Here I have an opportunity of talking about the Hidden Ulster/- ~~about~~

Map of North  
Animate Oirghialla

the poets of Oirghialla - a narrow irregular belt of country between the southern limits of the Ulster Plantation, and the northern limits of the purely English speaking districts of Leinster. The planters had come from the north as far as Keady and Newtownhamilton, in Armagh, to Ballybay and Castleblaney in Monaghan, and into Cavan as far as Shercock and Bailieborough. ✓

Animate Keady & M. Hamilton  
(1) Ballybay Castleblaney  
(2) Shercock & Bailieborough

O Boyle to camera

There was no chance for the expansion of the Irish language in that direction; but since they were Catholics, a bond of common misfortune made the Gaelic poets of Ulster welcome among the descendants of their hereditary enemies the Catholic Palesmen of Louth. ✓ Seamus Dall Mac Cuarta, the most classical poet of them all spent the most of his life around Omeath, and today his memory is perpetuated in a plaque by the roadside there, facing across Carlingford Lough to the mountains of Mourne. ✓

Film or still  
of plaque

Film or still  
Slieve Gullion

Art Mac Cooley was born in the shadow of Ireland's magic mountain Slieve Gullion where Fionn Mac Cumhaill used to hunt the stag, and where Fionn himself encountered

*O Boyle to camera  
against background  
of Slieve Gullion country*

*O Boyle reads poem  
to camera in preference  
to trying to match the  
images with pictures  
(the words are invariably  
lost if they're read  
against pictures)*

the Cailleach Beara. / Peadar O Doirnin  
taught school in Forkhill over there,  
and left Ulster her sweetest love song,  
Úr Chnoc Cein Mhic Cainte. Cathal Bui  
Mac Giolla Gunna knew Slieve Gullion  
often, from Farney (too, and saw it) in  
much the same way as Paddy Kavanagh, in  
this century.

My black hills have never seen the sun  
rising  
Eternally they look north towards Armagh.  
Lot's wife would not be salt if she  
had been  
Incurious as my black hills that are  
happy  
When dawn whitens Glasdrummond chapel.  
The sleety winds fondle the rushy  
beards of Shancoduff  
While the cattle drovers sheltering  
the Featharna bush  
Look up and say "Who owns them hungry  
hills  
That the water-hen and shipe must have  
forsaken?  
A Poet? Then by heavens he must be  
poor "



film ~~of~~ or still  
of Planter with  
Bawn e.g. Spring  
or Killyleagh C

O'Boyle to come

Film or still of  
Creggan Church  
which is sufficient  
material not to  
interfere with poetry  
rather to enhance  
atmosphere of poem

Visuals: Hinch  
prints of early linen  
processes. Somewhat  
idealized but good for  
this sequence. Available  
Ulster Museum

—  
Film of loom a  
work. A handl  
weaver works ever  
day at the Ulster  
folk Museum.

—  
Huck's print ago

Powel Friers  
drawing used to  
illustrate John  
Henitt's pamphlet,  
a collection of "weaver  
poetry" - available  
Linenhall Library

High Street print  
Ulster Museum or  
else early engraving  
of Linenhall Library

picture Dr. McDonnell  
"Mary Anne McDonnell"  
book has one, I think

picture Arthur O'Neill  
"Annals of the Irish  
Harpers" ?

Circular reproduced  
in "Antique" lettering  
Camera follows the  
text as it is read.

Also  
Watercolours of  
"High Street in the  
early 17th century"  
Ulster Museum

Also "18th century  
view of Belfast from  
banks of Lagan"  
Ulster Museum

But while some cloth was kept at home to provide for their own families, the bulk was sold to linen merchants at fairs in market towns like Lisburn, Dromore, Ballymoney, Bangor and Dungannon. By the end of the eighteenth century the bulk of Ireland's linen was made in Ulster. Belfast prospered as a port, and when the manufacture of cotton was introduced in 1780, the textile industries added to the wealth of the great merchants. A leisured and cultured

class developed in the City, and the Linen Hall Library was established in 1788.

Among the founders was a famous man from the Glens of Antrim/Doctor James McDonnell whose people had first come to Ireland from Scotland in the Thirteenth century. They had managed to hold on to their territory in the North of Antrim for five hundred years, and kept to the customs of an ancient Gaelic aristocracy even at the time when James was a boy. The famous harper

Arthur O'Neill lodged at their house, and the practice of copying of Gaelic Mss was assiduously practiced there. Not only did James speak the Irish language at home but he was brought up to love Irish Music, and to love the way of life in which he was reared.

When practicing as a doctor in Belfast at the turn of the 18th century he was primarily responsible for the publication of an historical circular issued in Belfast in 1791: "Some inhabitants of Belfast, feeling themselves interested in everything which relates to the Honor, as well as the Prosperity of their country; propose to open a subscription which they intend to apply in attempting to revive and perpetuate THE ANCIENT MUSIC AND POETRY OF IRELAND. They are solicitous to preserve from oblivion the few fragments, which have been permitted to remain as Mounuments of the refined Taste and Genius of their Ancestors.



In order to carry this project into execution, it must appear obvious to those acquainted with the situation of this Country, that it will be necessary to assemble the Harpers, almost exclusively possessed of all the remains of the MUSIC, POETRY and ORAL TRADITIONS OF IRELAND.

It is proposed, that the Harpers should be induced to assemble in Belfast (suppose on the 1st of July next) by the distribution of such prizes as may seem adequate to the subscribers: And that a person well versed in the Language and Antiquities of the Nation, should attend, with a skilful musician to transcribe and arrange the most beautiful and interesting parts of their knowledge.

An undertaking of this nature, will undoubtedly meet the approbation of Men of Refinement and Erudition in every country: And when it is considered how intimately the SPIRIT and CHARACTER of a people are connected with their NATIONAL POETRY and MUSIC it is presumed that the Irish Patriot and Politician, will not deem it an object unworthy of his patronage and Protection." Belfast Dec. 1791.

*There is a picture of  
this event but I forget  
the source*

*Also try  
Engraving  
"High Street, Belfast"  
in 1786"*

*Ulster Museum*

It was actually on 11th July, 1792 that the Harpers meeting took place, in the Assembly rooms above the Exchange, the principal building in the City, at that time. Of the ten performers present all but three were from Ulster - Art O'Neill, from Tyrone, Charles Fanning from Cavan, Daniel Black and Denis Hempson (he by the way was 97 years of age) from Co. Armagh and James Duncan from Co. Down. The ten sat up together on the stage of the Assembly rooms to entertain the elite of Protestant Belfast - yes, even on the 12th of July - and in among the harpers moved a youth of nineteen, noting down the airs they played.



Picture Edward  
Bunting  
"Marshall Mc Craiken"

An Englishman's son, born in Armagh, Edward Bunting, and at that time employed as an organist in St. Anne's Church in the city. The scene has been described in a letter from a lady of Fashion who was in Belfast at the time. "You must have an account of the Harpists too. I was hearing them one day; I like them very much. The Harp is an agreeable soft musick very like the notes of a Harpsichord; would be very pleasant in a small room. There were eight men and one woman all either blind or lame, and all old but two men. Figure to yourself this group, indifferently dressed, sitting on a stage erected for them in one end of the Exchange Ball Room, and the ladies and the gentlemen of the first fashion in Belfast and its vicinity looking on and listening attentively, and you will have an idea of how they looked. You can't imagine anything sweeter than the musick;"

Series of pictures  
of harpers

Still Wolfe Tone

Another person who visited the Harpers - not once but on three successive days was Wolfe Tone, and he thought they were poor enough. His mind was obviously on other things - the formation of the Society of United Irishmen, from the ranks of Grattan's Volunteers - but though he left the Assembly rooms on 13th July with "Strum, Strum and be hanged" as his only commentary on the Harpers, he was not averse to the United men having as their badge the Irish Harp with the motto: "It is new strung and shall be heard."

Still: Badge of  
United Men

Picture of  
Contemporary  
Belfast - available  
Ulster Museum  
Also picture of

Volunteers in Belfast  
and also Lisburn.  
Ulster Museum.

But on the last day of the Festival, it was not heard until seven o'clock in the evening to enable the citizens of Belfast to go out and see the Volunteers celebrating the Fall of the Bastille. Thousands of them came from every county in Ulster, carrying banners with mottoes like "Unite and Be Free....." Liberty and Equality..... Vive La Republique....." When they came into town, according to our young lady of Fashion again. They were joined by the gentlemen of the Town and neighbourhood



with the emblematick paintings and flags. They then marched through principal streets; their march terminated in Linen Hall Street where the Volunteers fired three great feus de joys. They then went into the Hall as many as it would hold, and made their declaration, held their debates, and settled the affairs of the Nation; it was eightt o'clock before they got to their dinners. There were a number of publick dinners through the town, but the grandest was the celebration banquet at the Donegal Arms; there they had all the grand toasts, celebrated songs etc., and paid half a guinea each man. Their were a number of Dublin gentlemen here; among the rest was the celebrated James Napper Tandy, that I suppose you have often heard of. I suppose there never was such a number of people in Belfast at once;"

*Drawing:*

*Battle of Antrim*

*(by Carey?)*

*Ulster Museum.*

*Painting*

*Battle of Ballyshannon*

*Ulster Museum*

*Uniforms of*

*United Men*

*Weapons, etc*

*Ulster Museum*

But the Belfast Volunteers were suppressed in the following year and the United Irishmen went underground. Their ultimate rebellion in Ulster was no more than a brave and bloody protest of Presbyterians against the Ascendancy and against the payment of tithes to the Established Church.

Catholics took little or no part in it, for at that time they had no sympathy with republican ideals. The Presbyterians rose out alone and badly led -

"In the time of the Hurry we had no lead -  
We all of us fought with the rest -  
And if eer a one shook like a tremblin' reed,  
None of us give neither hint nor heed,  
Nor ever even we'd guessed.  
We men of the North had a word to say  
An' we said it then in our own dour way,  
An' we spoke as we thought was best."



film of  
Cavehill  
McArto Fort  
Belfast Lough  
Engravings in  
"Irish Street  
Ballads"

It was on the Belfast mountains I heard a  
maid complain  
And she vexed the sweet June evening, with  
her heartbroken strain,  
Sayin woe is me, life's anguish is more than  
I can dree  
Since Henry Joy McCracken died on the gallows  
tree.

At Donegore he proudly rode and wore a suit  
of green

And brave though vain at Antrim town his sword  
flashed lightening keen

And when by spies surrounded his band to  
Slemish fled

He came unto the Cavehill to rest his weary head.

And twice that night a tramping came from the  
Old Shore Road,

'Twas Ellis and his Yeomen, false Niblick with  
them strode,

My father home returning the doleful story told

'Alas, "days he, "young Harry Joy for fifty  
pound is sold."

Now on the Belfast mountains this fair maid's  
voice is still

For in a grave they laid her on High Carnmoney  
Hill

And the sad waves beneath her chant requiem  
for the dead

And the rebel wind shrieks freedom above her  
weary head.

O Boyle to camera

And so the principles begotten of the  
Revolutions in America and France wend down  
in defeat in Belfast, just at the time when the  
town was preparing for the greatest revolution  
in her history.

Engraving of  
Mulholland's  
Mill

Also Hall's  
"Scenic Tour of  
Ireland"

published 1841

various industrial  
prints

also Ulster Museum

for early shipyard

pictures - around 1812

Ritchie's yard

The onset of the Industrial Revolution brought  
increasing prosperity to the town. Cotton Mills  
driven by water power were gradually outnumbered  
by Linen mills driven by steam. Iron foundries  
sprang up to supply machinery for the mills,  
and the busy port so thrived on Cross-Channel  
trade that "for the first time Belfast became  
an outpost of Industrial Britain rather than  
an indigenous part of the Irish economy".

'Now in Belfast we are doing better than in  
any other part of Ireland, and advancing more  
in civilisation and in literature than in any  
other part of Ireland, because we make money  
and business the standard, and when these are

first attended to we can apply ourselves to  
whatever other literary pursuits our respective  
tastes may lead us."

O Boyle to  
Camera

Try Linenhall  
Library or else  
Set up this in  
appropriate type  
face

Picture of R.S.  
M'Adam or  
else pictures of  
Victorian ironworks  
which would make  
a nice counterpoint  
to M'Adam's  
cultural pursuits.  
Andy Crockett U.T.V. has  
nice film of old Victorian  
engines actually at work  
in appropriate surroundings

Picture of  
Contemporary  
Belfast  
Ulster Museum

Employed 1892  
after debacle  
of the Glinski-



~~How the hell~~  
How the hell  
can you make  
this visual?

except perhaps  
to film you in  
appropriate Belfast

setting  
with song as  
commentary

Or else try contemporary  
Belfast scenes again.

Pictures of  
seamy Belfast  
- terrace houses,  
mills

Film rural scene  
or, better still, photo  
from the Lawrence  
Collection, National  
of 19th C. peasant life  
in Ireland from  
old photograph

I mBeul Ath Fearsde chois cuan ag bruch  
na farraige  
Tá beirt dhaoine uaisle tá stuama meanmnach  
A bhfuil a gcroidhe mar Ghuaire le suarcas  
is carthannacht,  
Hó! Ró! go raibh Dia leo go deoigh.  
Tháinig mé ar cuairt ar ruaig 'sníor  
bh'annamh liom  
Dá fhéachaint na ngruagach bh-i  
subhailceach taithneamhach  
Sé fuair mé 'na suí iad ag míniúghadh  
staindheacht  
Is Hó! Ró! nar bhainidh doibh g'leo.  
Tharruing Somhairle píopa bhí fideogach  
fad-chosach  
Agus chuaigh sé dá Líonadh, an ní úd dob  
aite leis,  
Le Luibh na mban sí a bheir íce do  
chailleachai  
Is Hó! Ró! is leis bhí an ródh.  
Ghlac mise seaite ag méadú na cuideachta  
Is líon mé mo dhúidín da dhiurnadh in  
aice leo  
Is go saoilfeá gur Franncaigh bhí  
'gcuan Charraig Feargusa  
Hó! Ró! muair a d'éirigh an ceo.

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Illustrations by &  
from "Traits and  
Stories"

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O Boyle to camera  
Or else in "Ireland  
from old photographs  
there are several  
beautiful pictures of  
old women in cottage  
Settings.

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Illustrations by Ph  
as above



picture of Sir.

early picture of the  
Ulster Museum

picture "Black M"

Boyle to cam

I'm stuck here —  
visuals could probably  
be continued but it  
is in doubt put  
"O Boyle to camera"

Or else film of  
O Boyle walking  
around significant  
parts of Belfast.

But no charge of want of 'respectability' was levelled at the next innovation from Dublin. Inspired by the activity of Yeats and the Ulsterman George Russell in the Irish Literary Theatre in Dublin, a group of young Ulstermen formed in Belfast in 1902 The Ulster Branch of the Irish Literary Theatre. Because of objection from the parent body in Dublin, the name was changed to the Ulster Literary Theatre — a change which James Connolly didn't like because, he asserted, "the aim of Ulster writers should be to realize Ulster to the rest of Ireland not to erect a barrier between it and the other provinces."

There were high political winds blowing about the young society. Fortunately it was watched over by men who were more concerned with the art of the theatre than with politics, and while they often used the stage to attack the bigotry and the social selfishness of their fellow citizens as well as to express their own opinions, they expressed them in terms of the drama, not in those of the political platform.

("The Arts in Ulster" p.53 Harrap & Co. 1951)  
The Ulsterman had found a voice and it was unmistakably Irish. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in the history of Ulster another movement which attracted such a galaxy of talent and in which men and women of such diverse talent and ~~in~~ ~~which men and women~~ of such diverse creeds



Any expression of his feelings and aspirations had for a century been made by his fellow Ulstermen in the English language. Among these writers two names are pre-eminent-William Carleton, a novelist and Sir Samuel Ferguson who is best remembered for his poetry. Carleton was born near Knockmany in Prillisk, Co. Tyrone, and in his Autobiography has vividly depicted for us his upbringing in a cottage, his education in a hedge-school, and his father and mother teaching him the local traditions and folklore, the culture of a disappearing way of life. Speaking of his mother who had a beautiful voice and sang generally in her native Gaelic he writes - "She had a prejudice against singing the Irish airs to English words; an old custom of the country was thereby invaded, and an association disturbed which habit had rendered dear to her. I remember on one occasion, when she was asked to sing the English version of that touching melody "The Red-haired Man's Wife" she replied 'I'll sing it for you, but the English words and the air are like a quarrelling man and wife; the Irish melts into the tune, but the English doesn't' - "an expression" says Carleton "scarcely less remarkable for its beauty than its truth".

Bean an Thur Rua: Red Haired Man's Wife



But while the Irish language was being so assiduously cultivated by the romantic antiquarians of Belfast, it was dying quickly on the lips of the people in the rest of the Province. Economic pressures of one kind or another were either pushing it farther and farther to the west or containing it in outlying areas like the Glens of Antrim and Rathlin Island and the Mourne in Down. It gradually became associated with the poverty of such "unprogressive" Catholics as still clung desperately to the land for their living. English was the language of fair and market, pulpit and political platform.

By the end of the century - if we omit Donegal which because of its remoteness was largely Irish speaking, <sup>topography</sup> the language was used as a primary tongue only in small <sup>in many</sup> and disconnected areas like the Antrim Glens, South Derry round Draperstown,

in the mid-Tyrone valley of Glenlarke and Glenelly, in west Cavan round gleann Ghaibhle, in the Farney district of Monaghan, in South Armagh and in Omeath. The bell had tolled for the Gael in Ulster.



He prized the friendship of Dr. McDonnell, Edward Bunting and Robert McAdam.

He studied the language in Cuideacht Gaeilge Uladh, became intensely interested in Tain Bo Cuailgne and in the native poetry that had been so diligently collected by McAdam and his collaborators. His poetical works consist mainly of metrical versions of Irish legends like "Congal" and of translations from the Irish poets of the 18th century.

The most important effect of these on the Ireland of his day was that they created an interest in Irish Culture among the Planters - an interest that no monoglot Irish speaker could ever have communicated to them. He paved the way for the Gaelic League which came to Belfast just nine years after his death in 1886, and he heralded the great Yeatsian revival of Anglo Irish literature that came in the next generation.

The first Ulster branch of the Gaelic League grew out of an Irish class that was held in the Belfast Naturalists Field Club and the most of its committee were Protestant. But as Cathal O Byrne says - "the league was never considered 'respectable' (that awful Belfast word) by the planters... The slogan did not impress Belfast. With the League's membership 99% Catholic, what could one expect? 'Scratch a Gaelic Leaguer and you'll find a Fenian' was the formula in the old days.

X



12. But Gaelic was on the way out. Carolan's readers were regaled in English by stories of the peasantry - tales of weddings and wakes, fights and funerals. "All written" as he said himself "by one born amidst the scenes he describes - reared as one of the people whose characters and situations he sketches."

Samuel F. Samuel Ferguson could hardly have written that about himself or his work. He was born in Belfast in 1810 and was educated at the Belfast Academical Institution, which was actually founded in the year of his birth. The expressed desire of its founders was that "pupils of all religious denominations should communicate by frequent and friendly intercourse, in the common business of education, by which means a new turn might be given to the national character and habits, and all the children of Ireland should know and love each other....."

an" (It is rather ironical that outside R.B.A.I., there should stand today a statue of Rev. W. Cooke, one of the greatest factors in the destruction of the harmony the R.B.A.I was pledged to foster).

era But to return to Ferguson. He was interested in all things Irish, our language mythology history and archaeology.



and political views were united in a common purpose". Amongst those who wrote for the theatre and for its magazine "Ulad" were Rutherford Mayne, Lynn Doyle, St. John Ervine, George Shields the dramatists, Forrest Reid, Helen Waddel, Alice Milligan, Robert Lynd, the essayist, Stephen G. Wynn the historian, James Connolly and Roger Casement, the revolutionaries,

*Pictures side by  
side of H. Hughes  
and C. Hardebeck*

and two men of music, Herbert Hughes and Carl Hardebeck.

These musicians never lifted a gun but the cultural revolution they initiated, each in his own sphere, spread throughout the country to involve, not only the "respectable" citizens of Belfast but the educated classes who had in Ferguson's time thought it "inexpedient to encourage anything tending to foster Irish sentiment". Herbert Hughes was a Protestant Belfast man and Carl Hardebeck a Belfast man by adoption, and a Catholic. They did not

*Donegal landscape*

look for the music of Ireland in the tomes of Bunting and Petrie labelled "Ancient Irish music" - they went out into the country where the music was alive and vigorous. Hardebeck took himself to the Gaeltacht in Donegal where among other songs, he accurately and for the first time ever transcribed "Bean an Fhir Ruaidh" as Carleton's mother would have preferred to sing it - with the Irish words melting into the tune.

*Picture Limestone Rd.  
with Cavehill in  
background*

Back home in 102, Limestone Road, Belfast, under the shadow of the Cavehill, he published at his own address and his own expense, the three volumes of "Seoda Ceoil" (Gems of melody) which set a headline to all subsequent collections of songs in Gaelic.

*Picture H. Hughes*

Herbert Hughes also went to Donegal and came home to publish "Songs of Uladh", containing the song that now means Ulster - and Ireland - wherever it is heard anywhere in the world - "My Lagan Love".



picture Harty

Zoom out to  
show three men's  
pictures together

O Boyle to  
camera

picture Errigal

picture: cover of  
book

Film or stills  
rural scenes  
landmarks like  
Moone Mts  
Antrim Coast  
Glens of Antrim  
etc.

Leaf through  
book at  
appropriate  
illustrations

You probably know it best in the arrangement by Hamilton Harty, who was born in Hillsborough Co. Down, and is undoubtedly the most finely gifted composer of Irish birth. There we have the three of them - Harty, Hughes and Hardebeck - out of the mess of sectarian Ulster, three men who will give us hope as long as their names alliterate.

I knew Carl Hardebeck from I was a boy and I eagerly imbibed his ideas about the close corporate relationship between the Irish language and our national music; and about the necessity of understanding the mind and outlook of the Gaelic-speaking Irishman. The Gaelic speaking Irishman I found of course in my native Ulster, in the Donegal Gaeltacht. / There in the shadow

of 'Errigal - Ulster's other magical mountain - I listened to the storytellers and the singers and finally made my own small contribution to the literature of Ulster folk song.

By the time that book was published in 1944 the work of Hughes and Hardebeck, the poetry of A.E. and Alice Milligan and Ethna Carbery, the Gaelic endeavours of An t-Ath Domhnall O Tuathail and Father Murray, <sup>all</sup> had influenced the thinking of many men in the towns and cities of the North. / The men who cared for such things - the poets musicians social historians geographers and folklorists had begun to search in the countryside for their identity, their roots, which had been obscured by the increasing mechanization and materialistic philosophy which surrounded them. Estyn Evans of Queen's University had written a book. So had Robert Lloyd Praeger, a botanist from County Down. Praeger's book "The Way that I Went" sub-titled 'An Irishman in Ireland' gave his fellow Ulstermen a hint of where they might look for their roots. /

Estyn Evans called his book "Irish Heritage" and in it he explored what he called the living past, the unrecorded past that spoke to him out of the manners and customs, trades and skills and lore of the rural community.



Suitable picture  
from 'Irish Folkways'

picture: Ulster  
Folk Museum

O Boyle to  
camera  
or else  
mean street in  
Belfast

clip from  
"Dusty Bluebells"

He showed us all that - as he himself put it in a later book "Irish Folkways" - "The crafts of arable farming of animal husbandry and the home industries have done more to shape our instincts and thoughts than the trampling of armies or the wrangling of kings". / Under his influence the Ulster Folk life Society was founded and eventually with the financial help of the Government of Northern Ireland, the Ulster Folk Museum - the first one of its kind in Ireland - was opened in Cultra on the shores of Belfast Lough. /

It was in Belfast itself that I began my own collection of Ulster folksongs in the English language. I was born there - only two generations from the country - and I knew that in the matter of folksong, the city was a microcosm of the rest of the Province of Ulster. The poor and the landless, the luckless homeweaver and the country mason, the victims of the Great Hunger of '47 all had poured into Belfast to look for work, and had slowly settled down. / It was under the shadow of a big mill that I first recorded Frank McPeake, from Ballymacpeake in Derry. It will surprise no one who has ever heard of the plantation of Ulster that the name of ~~this~~ song was "Will ye go lassie, go?" In Frank's boyhood the lack of social communication between the planter Scot and the native Irish Farmer had been gradually - if selectively - eroded by a shared poverty in the countryside. We have been told that they brought into the city the old jealousies and animosities of the rural communities, and that is very true, but they also brought their love of singing - and to this day many of the songs they made are echoed in the streets by the children of an even less fortunate generation. David Hammond - himself of Scots extraction and a native of Belfast like myself - has put it all on film for the whole world to see - in "Dusty Bluebells". /

McBoyle to  
Camera  
Film of Lough  
Neagh around  
Arboe ending  
up with Arboe cross

The songs I collected in the countryside itself contain in themselves as clear a picture of the social political and religious history of plantation Ulster as could ever be represented by historians.

The voice of the hedge-schoolmaster rings out clearly in this piece of local patriotism:

"Ye Gods assist my poor wearied notion  
Ye inspired Moses lend me your hand  
To help my endeavours both night and  
morning

To sing the praises of this lovely land.  
Well situated in the North of Ireland  
All in the County of sweet Tyrone  
Along the banks of famed Lough Neagh  
Is the Ancient fabric of Old Arboe

O Boyle to  
Camera

Here's a lament for the disappearance of a Planter's Castle in Portmore on the other side of the Lough. I call it Ulster's Kilcass:

"The birds of the forest they bitterly  
weep

Saying where shall I shelter

Or where shall I sleep?

For the oak and the ash they are all  
cutten down

And the walls of Bonny Portmore are  
down to the ground".

Film of Shave  
Gallon

The tyranny of landlordism generally is pointed in a song from the Derry hills:

The rents are getting higher and we can no longer stay

So farewell unto ye bonny, bonny Slieve  
Gallon Brae.

O Boyle to  
Camera

But in South Armagh the people regret the the absence of a kindly landlord, in their most famous song in English:

Squire Jackson he's unequalled for honour or  
for Reason,

~~He~~ never turned a traitor or betrayed the  
Rights of man

But now we are in danger from a vile  
deceiving stranger

Who has ordered transportation for the  
Boys of Mullaghbawn.



picture of  
O'Connell

The contemptuous opposition of Protestant  
Ulster to O'Connell comes out in:

"O Connell he does boast  
Of his great big rebel host  
he says they are ten thousand in number  
But most of them you'll find  
They are either lame or blind  
But we're the brave Orange Heroes of  
Comber".

film of  
Orange  
Banner

And the necessity for circumspection in  
conversation about politics and religion  
is expressed in a typical Ulster fashion,  
in these lines on the murder of an  
Orangeman, McBriers:

"It was the whiskey in his head  
No harm was in his mind  
He happened for to tell too loud  
The way his heart inclined"

O Boyle to  
camera

Songs like these mixed with the classical  
ballads and love songs of the Planter stock -  
like "The False Bride" and "Lord Randall"  
were commonly heard in the urban areas  
of Ulster after World War 2 - on gramophone  
and radio in church halls and lecture rooms.  
Some people were hearing their country's  
history for the first time. One could  
hear in many places echoes of Shakespeare's  
Captain Mackmorrice in Henry V - "Of my  
Nation. What is my Nation?" / In 1942 John  
Hewitt the poet could give no more definite  
answer to the question than

picture of John  
Hewitt - I have  
a good one

"This is my home and country. Later on  
Perhaps I'll find the nation is my own".

In 1949 he wrote a poem called "The Colony"  
in which he compared the circumstances of  
the planters' descendants to those of a  
Roman Colony at the time of the Empire's  
warning -

film of man  
digging in a  
field

"We are changed from the raw levies,  
which usurped the land, if not to kin,  
to co-inhabitants,  
As goat and ox may graze in the same field  
And each gain something from proximity;  
/-.....

For we have rights drawn from the soil  
and sky  
The use, the pace, the patient years of  
labour,

the rain against the lips, the changing  
light, the heavy clay-sucked strike,  
have altered us.

We would be strangers in the Capitol  
this is our country also, no-where else;  
And we shall not be outcast on the world"

*O Boyle to  
Camera*

May I say here for one and I hope in the name  
of all the native Irish in Ulster "You're  
welcome John. Céad míle fáilte romhat".

Come on down with me to the shores of  
Lough Neagh, to Derrytresk and the house of  
Geordie Hanna, to a ceile-ing house where  
the men of Ulster of all kinds and conditions  
of life are welcome- call them Planter and

*film of Geordie  
Hanna's ceili*

Gael, Settler and Native, Protestant  
Catholic or Dissenter, give them whatever  
divisive title you like. There you'll  
find them all in one house to enjoy each  
others' company. What does it matter if a  
lad or lassie in it belongs in our Ulster  
phrase to "the other side of the house"?  
It's still the one house. Or what does it  
matter if the fiddler or the singer  
"digs with the other foot"? We are all  
digging on the same farm.

S. O Baoill

9th August, 1972