

"The Rambling Irishman"

TOM BRANDON



FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC.

HUNTINGTON, VERMONT



"The Rambling Irishman"

TOM BRANDON

TOM BRANDON was born on May 26th, 1927, in Midland, Ontario, where his father was a sawyer for a lumber-mill. Both his father and mother were of Irish descent, and he learned songs from both sides of the family.

When Tom was sixteen, he began working on the boats on the Great Lakes in the summer and in lumber-camps in the winter. He continued this work until he was twenty-four. On the boats, he worked at various times as a deckhand, fireman, and wheelsman. In the lumber-camps, he was generally hired as a sawyer. During these eight years he picked up many songs from the sailors and lumberjacks with whom he worked, adding to the songs he had learned from his family.

Tom is a big, good-humored man, weighing 260 pounds, and he has little use for city-life. He loves the out-of-doors and his favorite recreation is hunting.

Just as O. J. Abbott was the finest of the older singers I've recorded, so Tom is the finest of the younger singers. He is a natural singer who effortlessly catches the spirit and flavor of his varied songs.

From the notes by EDITH FOWKE

Side 1:

The Rambling Irishman
The Irish Soldier Boy
There is a Lady in this Town
Muskoka
The Maid of the Mountain Brow
The "Lady Leroy"
The "Flying Cloud"

Side 2:

The Trans-Canada Highway
The Rock Island Line
The Croppy Boy
Kevin Barry
Patrick Sheehan
The Blarney Stone
My Bonny Black Bess
Jack Haggerty

"The Rambling Irishman"

TOM BRANDON

of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

Recorded by Edith Fowke

Edited by Sandy Paton

Notes by Edith Fowke

FSC-10



© 1963

FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC.

SHARON, CONNECTICUT

The leading business

TOM BRADSHAW

to photograph your business

illustrated by John Jones

edited by John Jones

to be known by John Jones

THE



THE

THE

THE

TOM BRANDON"The Rambling Irishman"

Just as O. J. Abbott was the finest of the older singers I've recorded, so Tom Brandon is the finest of the younger singers. His repertoire is by no means as large as Mr. Abbott's, but it is surprisingly large and varied for a traditional singer now in his thirties. Also, like Mr. Abbott, Tom is a natural singer who effortlessly catches the spirit and flavor of his varied songs.

Although Tom now lives in Peterborough, the region I have found richest in traditional singers, he was not born there, and it was pure chance that he was living there when I began to collect in that area. However, his background is just about ideal for a traditional singer. He was born on May 16, 1927, in Midland, Ontario, where his father was a sawyer for a lumber-mill. Both his father and mother were of Irish descent, and he learned songs from both sides of the family. His father's father came to Canada from Belfast in the 1870's, and farmed near Georgian Bay, where his father, Jim, was born about 1883. From him Tom learned "The Rambling Irishman", "There is a Lady in this Town", "My Bonny Black Bess", "The Maid of the Mountain Brow", and "The Lady Leroy". On the other side of the family, his mother's mother was a singer and dancer who came to Canada at the age of 17 in the 1860's. From stories in the family, Tom believes that she had lived in Wexford, but she sailed from Tipperary. His mother, Jane Ann Coffey, did not sing much herself, but her oldest brother, John Coffey, was a great singer. He died in 1961 at the age of 91. Through his mother Tom learned "The Croppy Boy" and "Patrick Sheehan". He has three older brothers: Jack, Everett, and Orlo, who are all singers. (Orlo may be heard on Prestige International 25014.)

When Tom was ten his family moved from Midland to Kinmount where his father worked in another lumber-mill. At sixteen Tom began working on the boats on the Great Lakes in the summer and in lumber-camps in winter, and continued this schedule until 1951 when he was 24. The Great Lakes boats on which he worked were mostly hauling grain from the Lakehead (Fort William and Port Arthur) to Midland or Goderich, or on paper runs from the Lakehead to Chicago and Milwaukee or Greenbay, Wisconsin. At various times Tom worked as deckhand, fireman, and wheelsman. The lumber-camps in which he worked were

mainly around Kinmount, and he was usually hired as a sawyer. During these eight years he continued to pick up songs from the sailors and lumberjacks he met.

In 1951 he began to work for the Canadian Pacific Railway in Toronto as a leverman, operating signals and switches. The following year he married a nurse, Loretta Clarke, who is also of Irish descent. For five years they lived in the west end of Toronto and then, in 1957, the CPR transferred Tom to Peterborough where he has lived ever since. There are five young Brandons — all girls.

I first met Tom in 1957 through another Peterborough singer, Emerson Woodcock, who also came from Kinmount. A number of the songs Tom sang for me in 1957 and 1958 have since appeared on records: "The Bold Privateer", "The Hobo's Grave", and "The Twelfth of July" on Folkways FM 4005; "The Jam on Gerry's Rocks" and "Johnny Stiles" on Folkways FM 4052; and "Erin's Green Shores" and "The Spree" on Prestige International 25014. He also sang in an evening concert of folk music from Ontario and Nova Scotia presented at the Quebec meeting of the International Folk Music Society in August, 1961. While there he found himself quite at home among such singers and collectors as Sam Eskin, Sandy Ives, and Pete Seeger, and he delighted in the songs of old Mr. Abbott who also appeared in the concert.

Tom is a big, good-humored man, weighing 260 pounds (although he has recently decided to take off some of that), and he has little use for city life. He loves the out-of-doors and his favorite recreation is hunting. Before our last recording session he had just returned from a hunting trip in which he managed to get a deer.

The songs he sings cover many types: old Irish broadside ballads, rebel songs, more modern Irish songs, lumberjack ballads, depression songs, and American cowboy ballads. In addition to the ones mentioned above and those included on this record, he also knows "Plantanio, the Pride of the Plains", "Kelly, the Boy from Killane", "The Texas Rangers", "The Cowboy's Lament", "The Wild Colonial Boy", and "Barney McCoy", and fragments of many more, including a lovely version of "The Wraggle Taggle Gypsies, O", an as yet unidentified rebel song about "Kelly, the Fenian Boy", "The Girls of Coleraine", "The Star of the County Down", and "Utah Carroll".

While his repertoire is varied, Tom sings only the songs that appeal to him, and he has quite definite opinions about the songs he likes. He has nothing but

scorn for many of the so-called Irish songs so popular on the music-hall stage, concluding quite rightly that most of them were made in America. He notes that his father and mother never sang that kind of song, and that the original Irish immigrants were serious about their situation and therefore the songs they sang were serious. They did not go in for the silly or sentimental or comic verses that have come to be identified with the Irish in modern times.

NOTES ON THE SONGS

Side I, Band 1. THE RAMBLING IRISHMAN

Variations of this song are very widespread. It is usually identified as "The Roving Journeyman", in which form it was collected in England. In America, the most common form is "The Roving Gambler" which Sandburg gives (pp. 312-3), noting that it seems to be a minstrel re-write of "The Gamboling Man" (Delaney's Songbook, No. 23). The hero also turns up as "The Guerilla Man" (Randolph IV, pp. 356-8, and Belden, pp. 374-7), and as a roving shantyboy in "Ye Maidens of Ontario" (Rickaby, pp. 79-81). For other American variants, see Laws I, pp. 221-2.

In all the songs belonging to this family the hero, a roving man of some kind, arrives in a place where he is welcomed by the girls; very soon one girl tells her mother that she loves him; the mother objects, but the girl sticks to her determination to go off with him. The conversation between mother and daughter sometimes wanders into other songs which have little direct relationship to the original form, and "The Roving Gambler" tends to merge into songs usually identified as "The Rebel Soldier" or "Rye Whiskey" which have even less connection with "The Roving Journeyman".

"The Rambling Irishman" obviously belongs to the older British branch of the family. Although it was common on broadsheets, the only English report from oral tradition seems to be Baring-Gould's version from Devonshire printed in Songs of the West:

"Young Jack he was a journeyman that roved from
town to town,
And when he'd done a job of work he lightly sat
him down
With his kit upon his shoulder and a grafting knife
in hand
He roved the country 'round about, a merry journeyman.."

There the parallel is obvious, and "The Rambling Irishman" itself has been collected at least twice in Ireland:

the BBC collection has it sung by Mary Doran of Belfast (RPL 18553), and Donagh McDonagh of Dublin has a copy in his collection which has been reproduced by Dick Cameron on Folkways FS 3516. These are very close to the one Tom sings, with a mention of Philadelphia as the city in which the rambler lands.

"The Rambling Irishman" has also wandered to other continents. In Australia John Meredith has recorded "Denis O'Reilly" as sung by Edwin Goodwin on Wattle 7, "Australian Traditional Singers and Musicians":

"My name is Denis O'Reilly, from Dublin town I came
For to sail this world all over I sailed for the
Australian main.
With my pack upon my shoulder and a blackthorn in
my hand
For to travel the bushes of Australia like a true-
born Irishman..."

Tom learned this song from his father, and it appears to be the first report of this form on this continent, even though the mention of Philadelphia in the Irish versions seems to suggest an American origin. The American version which comes closest in text to the Irish form is "The Roving Pedlar" noted from George Edwards in the Catskills (Cazden, II, pp. 98-9).

I am a rambling Irishman, I've travelled this
country o'er,
I've formed a resolution to leave my native
shore.
With a knapsack o'er me shoulder and a black-
thorn in my hand,
I headed for Americay like a rambling Irishman.

Now when I reached Americay the girls all
jumped with joy,
Said one unto the other, "Here comes an Irish
boy."
They took me into the saloon and taking me by
the hand,
The very first toast they all drank 'round was
"Good health to an Irishman."

Now I had not been in Americay not more than a
week or so
When I formed a resolution to further lands I'd go.
With a knapsack on me shoulder and a blackthorn
in my hand,
I started for Pennsylvania like a rambling
Irishman.

Now when I reached Pennsylvania, an inn as I
passed by,
The landlord's lovely daughter to me was no
ways shy.
She asked me in to dine with her, and taking
me by the hand
She went home and told her mother she was in
love with an Irishman.

"Now daughter, dearest daughter, oh what do you
mean to do,
For you to marry an Irishman, a man that you
never knew."
"Now hold your tongue, dear mother, and do the
best you can,
For there's friendship and good nature in the
heart of an Irishman."
Now my rambling days are over and I mean to
take a wife,
I'll work for her and toil for her the dear
days of my life.
I'll work for her and toil for her and do the
best I can,
And I know she'll never rue the day that she
married an Irishman.

Side I; Band 2. THE IRISH SOLDIER BOY

This rather sentimental ballad has apparently not
turned up in oral tradition elsewhere in America, although
I have recorded it twice in Ontario. Nor does it seem to
be widely known in Ireland, although it does appear in a
popular songster, All Ireland Song Book, published by the
Irish Songbook Company in 1950.

Tom's version, which he learned from his father,
parallels the Irish version fairly closely, except that in
it the second stanza is designated as the chorus, and it
contains an additional stanza. It is interesting to note
that Tom's last stanza condenses the last two stanzas of
the Irish version which run:

"Goodbye, farewell, my mother dear, I'm dying a
death so grand
From wandering scenes and in action's pride to free
my native land.
But I hope we'll meet in Heaven above in the land
beyond the sky
Where you'll always be in company with your Irish
soldier boy.

"A long farewell to Donegal, Kilkenny and Mayo,
Tipperary, Derry and Tyrone where the bushes green
do grow,
And when at night you kneel to pray, 'twill be a
source of joy

To know you're in the memory still of your Irish
soldier boy."

This ballad is obviously very closely related to "The
Faithful Sailor Boy" (Laws II, K 13); in fact, the first
stanza of the latter is practically a parody:

"'Twas on a dark and stormy night, the snow lay on
the ground,
A sailor boy stood on the deck; the ship was outward
bound.
His sweetheart standing by his side shed many a bitter
tear,
At last he pressed her to his heart and whispered in
her ear:"

One of these was obviously inspired by the other, but at
present there is not sufficient evidence to decide which
was the original.

It was on a cold and wintry night and the snow
lay on the ground,
A youthful Irish soldier boy to the mountains
he was bound.
His mother stood beside him saying, "You'll win,
my boy, no fear,"
With loving arms around him as she tied his
bandoliers.

"Farewell, God bless you, mother, I hope your
heart won't pain,
And pray to God your soldier boy, your son
you'll see again,
And when I'm on the firing line it will be a
source of joy
To know that you're a mother proud of an Irish
soldier boy."

When the fighting was all over and the flag of
truce was raised,
The leaders ordered the fire to cease and old
Ireland stood amazed,
And when they came to her cottage door with a
note from her only boy,
Her aching heart cried "God be good to my Irish
soldier boy."

"Here's a long farewell to Donegal, Kilkenny
and Mayo,
To Kerry, Derry and Tyrone where the rushes
green do grow,
Hoping we'll meet on a happier shore that lies
beyond the sky
Where I always will in memory be with my Irish
soldier boy."

This ballad of marital discord, usually identified as "The Old Woman of Slapsadam", is very popular in both Canada and the United States, not only in this form, but in a nineteenth-century offshoot known as "Johnny Sands". Tom sings the older form, which has also been reported from West Virginia, Indiana, Kentucky, Texas, Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, North Carolina, Maine, Arkansas, Michigan and New Jersey (Laws II, p. 274).* It is one of the most popular ballads in Ontario for I have recorded it from three other singers.

The many versions all tell the story of the husband who asks his wife's aid in drowning himself and then manages to let her drown herself instead. The most common form (often referred to as "Eggs and Marrowbones") has the wife going to the doctor to get something "to make her old man blind", and being told to feed him eggs and marrowbones. One of the Ontario versions specifies marrowbones, but here she is merely given medicine.

The ballad almost invariably begins: "There was an old woman" (or an old lady), but the location of that woman varies widely. In addition to Slapsadam she lived in Ireland, London, Dover, Armour, Kelso, or, as here, simply "in our town". The ballad is also remarkable for the variety of refrains associated with it: all four Ontario versions have quite different nonsense refrains, and so do most of the American versions. On the other hand, they all have a common metrical pattern and many similar phrases, although they demonstrate much more verbal variation than the "Johnny Sands" variant of the story.

Although it is listed with the broadside ballads, it seems likely that this tale originated with the folk rather than with the broadside printers.

This is another of the ballads Tom learned from his father.

*To these, add New York (see FSA-19, to be released).

There is a lady in this town
That loves her husband well,
And there's another man in the town
That she loves twice as well.

CHORUS: With a ri-fa-la fa-lul-ury um,
Sing fa-la-loora-lay,
With a ri-fa-la fa-lul-ury um,
Sing fa-la-loora-lay.

She went to the doctor
To see if she could find,
To try and get some medicine
To run her old man blind.

He gave to her some medicine
And sealed it with his hand
To give to her old man
That he might understand.

She gave to him the medicine
And told him, "Drink it all."
Said he, "I am so blind now
That I can't see you at all."

Said he, "I'd go and drown myself
If I but knew the way."
Said she, "My dearest husband,
You shan't be led astray."

She took him to the waterside,
She took him to the brim.
Said he, "I will not drown myself
Unless you shove me in."

Now she took to her a running jump
To shove the old man in,
But so nimbly he stepped aside
And she went headlong in.

Now my song is finished,
And I cannot sing no more,
But wasn't she the darndest fool
She didn't swim ashore?

Side I; Band 4. MUSKOKA

This is a Canadian adaptation of "The State of Arkansas" (or "An Arkansas Traveller"). Muskoka, here mispronounced to rhyme with Arkansas, is a rural district some hundred miles north of Toronto.

The ballad describing the charms of Arkansas is quite widely known, having been reported from West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Illinois, Minnesota, and Texas (Laws I, p. 220). Usually the singer is Sanford (or Stanford) Barnes, or Bill Stafford, and he nearly always comes from "Buffalo town".

Naturally the libel is not popular in Arkansas, and Lomax reports: "On one occasion when a Texas cowboy sung it for the amusement of the boys at the chuckwagon, a lanky Arkansasyer arose, unlimbered his six-foot even frame and beat upon the Texan until he admitted that the ballad was 'a dadblamed lie'". (p. 228)

Belden notes that "Some of the texts suggest that it was originally a song of Irish navvies imported to work on railroads in Arkansas" (p. 424). This form, which the singer called "The Irish Emigrant's Lament", is known in Ontario, with the usual setting of Arkansas. Tom got this localized version from a Peterborough neighbor, Cornelius O'Riley, whose father was a farmer north of Peterborough.

My name is Paddy Shannon,
I was born in Buffalo town,
For seven long years or better
I have rambled this country 'round.
It's up and down the country, boys,
And better times I saw;
I never knew what hardship was
Till I struck Muskoka.

In eighteen hundred and eighty-four,
In the early part of June,
I landed in Muskoka
On a Wednesday afternoon.
I met a lug down on the street
With a long and lantern jaw,
Inviting me to his hotel,
The best in Muskoka.

I rose from bed next morning
For to catch the early train.
Says he, "Young man, you'd better stay,
I've rivers for to drain.
I'll give you fifty cents a day,
Your washing, board, and all,
And I'll bet you'll be a different man
When you leave Muskoka."

Well, I hired with the ugly lug,
McCluskey was his name,
Six foot seven in his shoes,
As lean as any crane.
His hair fell down in rat tails
Along his lantern jaw,
A specimen of all the guys
You'll find 'round Muskoka.

He fed me on corn dodgers
Just as hard as any rock,
Me teeth began to loosen and
Me knees began to knock.
You should have seen the look of me,
I could hide behind a straw;
You bet I was a different guy
When I left Muskoka.

'Twas on a cold November morning
 I decided for to spill.
 I shook the shoes right off my feet
 In the cold November chill.
 I walked into the first saloon
 And asked for whiskey, raw,
 And I got drunk as a son of a gun
 When I left Muskoka.

Side I; Band 5. THE MAID OF THE MOUNTAIN BROW

This typical example of the Irish broadside ballad seems to have been equally popular on both sides of the Atlantic. In Ireland it was known as "The Maid of the Sweet Brown Knowe" — a knowe being a small hill. As this term is not common in North America, singers here have almost universally changed it to "The Maid of the Mountain Brow", a title with a similar sound and similar meaning which makes more sense on this continent. The only American exception to the "mountain brow" title is a Minnesota version reported by Dean where it became "The Maid of the Logan Bough" (p. 83), again a similar sound that would seem more intelligible to those who had never heard of a knowe.

This ballad was quite widely known in Ontario; I have two other versions collected in different parts of the province. It was also apparently common in the Canadian Maritimes for both Greenleaf (p. 153) and MacKenzie (p. 124) report it. It is relatively rare in the States, for in addition to Dean's Minnesota version it has been reported only from Michigan (Gardner, p. 122) and the Catskills (Cazden II, pp. 68-9).

The pattern is very similar in all reported versions. The six stanzas Tom sings correspond stanza for stanza with the Irish version O'Lochlainn gives, which he drew partly from ballad sheets (p. 38). Both the Nova Scotia and the Newfoundland versions have a final stanza that does not appear in O'Lochlainn or in any of the Ontario versions: it reports the girl regretting her hasty words, and may well have been a New World addition to point up the moral. The Catskill version adds still another stanza in which Johnny reconsiders and agrees to marry the now-repentant maid.

Come all young men and maidens
 And listen to my song,
 It's all about a gay young man
 And it won't detain you long;
 It's all about a gay young man,
 I mean to tell you now,
 It was lately he fell in love with
 The maid of the mountain brow.

He said, "My lovely fair maid,
If you'll come along with me,
We'll go and we'll get married
And how happy we will be,
We'll join our hands in wedlock bands
If you'll come with me now,
And I'll labor late and early for
The maid of the mountain brow.

This girl being young and silly,
She didn't know what to say,
Her eyes they shone like diamonds
And merrily she did say,
"Kind sir, I'd rather be excused,
I can't go with you now,
I will tarry another season by
The foot of the mountain brow."

Said he, "My pretty fair maid,
What makes you say so?
Look down in yonder valley
Where my crops do gently grow,
Look down in yonder valley
At my horses and my plow,
Where they labor late and early for
The maid of the mountain brow."

"If they labor late and early,
Kind sir, it is not for me,
The character I hear you are
Is none the best," said she.
"There is an inn where you pass in,
I've heard the people say,
Where you drink and call and pay for all,
Go home at the break of day."

"If I drink and call and pay for all,
My money it is my own,
And I spend none of your fortune, love,
I hear that you have none.
You thought you had my poor heart won
While happening on me now,
But I'll leave you where I found you
By the foot of the mountain brow.

So all young men fill your cup to the brim,
Let the toast go merrily 'round,
We'll drink the health of every man
That plows and sows the ground;
We'll drink to the health of everyone
No matter what people say,
And we'll drink and call and pay for all,
Go home at the break of day.

"The Lady Leroy" belongs to that large group of ballads in which a girl disguises herself in men's clothing and goes off to sea or to war — with her lover, or in pursuit of him. As Belden puts it, "The figure of the Maiden Warrior (as she is called in some of the English broadsides of the seventeenth century) has appealed to the human imagination from the days of Theseus and Hippolyta in the Mediterranean countries and of Alfred and Alfhild in the Baltic, down through the Britomart and the Mary Ambree of Elizabethan England, to our own time. Permutation and combination of a few simple elements have produced almost innumerable stall ballads on this theme in the last three centuries" (p. 171).

This particular permutation is distinguished by the fact that the girl buys one of her father's ships for her elopement, and then defeats the ship he sends in pursuit.

While "The Lady Leroy" is obviously Irish in origin, it does not appear to be known in Britain either as a stall ballad or from tradition, nor has any American ballad print been reported. However, it is very widespread in North American tradition, having been recorded in Newfoundland, Vermont, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, New York, Minnesota, and Ontario (Laws II, p. 204)*. It is interesting to note that Maud Karpeles collected a version in Peterborough in 1929 (JFSS viii, p. 218) which is very close to the Brandon version. Tom's father knew it, and I have also recorded it from his brother, Orlo. I have one other Ontario version, recorded in Erinsville, some hundred miles from Peterborough.

The various texts show considerable variation, and many are somewhat confused, perhaps because "The Lady Leroy" appears to be the name both of the heroine and of the ship. The title is fairly constant, except for a Newfoundland version reported by Greenleaf (pp. 220-1) where it is given as "The Lady Uri". In most texts they sail from Ireland and make for Boston, but Belden's Missouri text has them sailing from England and making for Spain (pp. 180-2).

This is another of the songs Tom's father sang. I recorded it first from Tom's brother, Orlo, as Tom didn't remember all the words. However, when I showed him the text as Orlo had sung it, he was able to correct some lines that were confused, and produced a clearer version.

*To this, add New Brunswick, where it was sung by Paul Kingston, of Wayerton, in the 1962 Miramichi Festival. (Ed.)

As I went out walking for pleasure one day
To view the green fields where all nature seemed gay,
I spied a fair damsel on Erin's green shore
Just a-viewing the ocean where the wild billows roar.

Said I, "Pretty Molly, you're the girl I adore
And all for to love you it grieves my heart sore.
Your parents are rich like and angry with me,
And if I tarry longer well ruined I'll be."

So she dressed herself up in a suit of men's clothes
And away to her father she instantly goes.
She purchased a ship and laid down the demand,
But little did he think it was from his own daughter's
hand.

When her father heard this he did curse and he swore,
And away to his captain to bid him prepare
For to seek them and find them and their ship destroy
For they never shall enjoy my proud Lady Leroy.

Oh, the captain being proud of this venture did go
To seek them and find them like some daring foe.
He spied a fair vessel and his colors let fly,
Oh, he held her and found she was the Lady Leroy.

"Now return ye, return to old Ireland once more
Or a large charge of grapeshot on you I will pour."
Now this young Irish hero gave them this reply,
"I never shall return till I conquer or die."

Then boatside to broadside on each other did pour
And louder than thunder their cannons did roar.
Oh, they hoisted a topsail and their colors let fly
And away on the ocean sailed the Lady Leroy.

Now they steered straight for Boston, that city of fame,
The ship's chief and commander will tell you the same.
Here's adieu to pretty Molly and may she enjoy
Her proudest of heroes and the Lady Leroy.

Side I; Band 7. THE FLYING CLOUD

Laws terms "The Flying Cloud" (K 28) "the best of the pirate ballads", and notes that it is unique "in its length, its wealth of detail, and its dealing with both slavery and piracy, two colorful blots on human history" (II, p. 11).

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, American ships openly engaged in the slave trade and continued to smuggle slaves into Southern ports even after the practice was forbidden by several Acts of Congress between 1807 and 1823. Piracy was also common in the Caribbean and Atlantic during the same period, and many former blackbirders or privateers turned pirate when their former trades became illegal.

Colcord believes this ballad "dates from the period 1819 to 1823 when the West Indies were finally cleared of pirates by the joint efforts of the United States and several European naval powers" (p. 145). Doerflinger feels that it could not have originated before 1830 because of "the many parallels in details and in wording between its verses and a paper-covered 12½ cent book, 'The Dying Declaration of Nicholas Fernandez', purporting to be the confession of one of the crew of the notorious Benito de Soto on the eve of his execution in Cadiz in 1829" (p. 135). However, this theory is not generally accepted because the style is typical of many conventional gallows ballads (sometimes termed "last good-nights") which circulated by the hundreds in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries after the execution of any notorious criminal.

Although the detailed story seems too vivid not to be based on actual events, no one has yet discovered any historical basis for it. The only Flying Cloud noted in American history was not built until 1851 — the famous clipper ship built by Donald McKay of Boston and sailed by Joseiah P. Creese of Marblehead, which in 1851 made the passage to San Francisco in a record 89 days. This was obviously not the ship of the ballad, although its name may have been attached to it long after its composition. No trace of a ship of that name or of a Captain Moore has been discovered in any accounts of American shipping during the era in question. However, Sydney Cowell makes the suggestion that the Baltimore named is not the New England port, but a harbor of the same name on the south-east coast of Ireland west of Tramore (notes accompanying Folkways FM 4001). Horace Beck, who wrote an extensive article on "The Riddle of the Flying Cloud" (Journal, 66, pp. 123-133), feels that this was originally two separate ballads of which the one dealing with slavery was the older, and that the first part probably dates from the middle of the eighteenth century. If this theory is correct, it is very strange that no trace of the separate ballads has been reported.

"The Flying Cloud" was widely popular both aboard sailing ships and in the lumbercamps. Indeed, Rickaby tells us that "this is the ballad of which it was said that in order to get a job in the Michigan camps, one had to be able to sing it through from end to end!" (p. 223) Certainly most old-time lumberjacks take pride in their ability to recall the whole of the lengthy tale. There is also a remarkable consistency in all the collected versions; it shows far fewer variations than many shorter ballads which one would expect to be preserved with less difficulty. Most of the versions, like Tom's, contain sixteen stanzas. A few (i.e. Creighton, pp. 126-133) have an additional introductory stanza of the come-all-ye type in which the narrator tells his listeners that he's condemned "for plundering and burning ships all on the Spanish Main".

While the thread of the story remains unusually constant in all versions, there are several variations in detail, notably in the name of the narrator, the name of the port where he meets Captain Moore, and the name of the ship that captures the Flying Cloud.

Of the first, Mackenzie has this to say: "The remorseful hero designates himself by such a variety of names in the different versions of his exploits that one who is unfamiliar with the eccentricities of the folksong might be inclined to suspect him of seeking refuge behind a series of aliases. In the Scottish version in Greig (CXVIII), he is William Hollander. In a version in Journal (XXV, p. 370) his 'name is Edward Hallahan'. Gray (pp. 116-123) prints two texts from Maine in which he is now Edwards Hollahan and then Edward Hallahan. Dean's version from Minnesota (pp. 1-2) presents him as Willie Hollander. Two other aliases are Edward Hollander (Colcord, pp. 73-5), and Henry Hollander (Rickaby, pp. 145-9). But his most complete disguise is reserved for the Nova Scotia version in which he appears as Robert Anderson" (p. 283). This variety of names is the more surprising because the cooper to whom he was apprenticed is consistently William Brown and the commander is always Captain Moore. The first name of Edward predominates, with William as a second choice, and Robert and Henry also occurring; the last names are usually variations on Hollander or Hollahan except in Nova Scotia where Anderson was general — this might be a subconscious carry-over from the somewhat similar ballad about another Anderson (Charles Augustus) who was hanged for his crimes aboard a different vessel, the Saladin.

The port where the narrator meets Captain Moore is most frequently Valparaiso, but that rather unfamiliar name has not unnaturally been corrupted into Belfraiser or Belfraser's Shore, not only in Tom's version but in others reported by Belden, Rickaby, and Thompson. Waterford as the home of the cooper and Tramore as the home of the Irish lad have remained relatively constant, and the ship by which the narrator leaves Ireland is usually the Ocean Queen, but the ship that captures the Flying Cloud varies from Dungeon to Dragon to Dunmore, and occasionally is not mentioned at all. Colcord, who gives it as the Dunmore, notes that a British man-of-war of that name took part in a raid in the Chesapeake region during the War of 1812 (p. 145).

Tom learned "The Flying Cloud" from his father and had little difficulty in remembering it; he sang it for me when I first recorded him in 1957 in substantially the same form as given here.

My name is Edward Holland as you might understand,
I was born, brought up in Waterford's town in Erin's
happy land.

When I was young and in my prime kind fortune on me
smiled,

My parents doted on me, I being their only child.

My father bound me to a trade in Waterford's fair
town.

He bound me to a cooper there by the name of William
Brown.

I served my master faithfully for eighteen months or
more,

Till I shipped on board of the Ocean Queen sailing for
Belfraser's shores.

Now when we reached Belfraser's shore I met with Captain Moore,
The commander of the Flying Cloud sailing out from Baltimore.
He wanted me to come with him on a slaving voyage to go
To the burning plains of Africa where the sugar cane does grow.

The Flying Cloud was a clipper barge carrying **eighty** tons
or more;
She could easily sail 'round anything coming out from Baltimore.
Her sails were as white as the driven snow and on them was no
stain,
And eighteen mounted polished guns she carried abaft her main.

So we sailed away o'er the raging main till we came to the
African shores.

Five hundred of those poor black souls from their native
homes we tore.

We dragged them all across our decks and stowed them down
below,

And eighteen inches to a man was all that we could allow.

We sailed away o'er the raging main with a full cargo of
slaves.

It would have been better for those poor souls had they been
in their graves,

For the plague and fever came on board, swept half of them
away;

We dragged their bodies across our decks and hove them in
the sea.

So we sailed away all gallant gay till we came to the Cuban
shores

And sold them to the planters there to be slaves forevermore,
To work all day in the cotton fields beneath the blazing sun,
To while away their few short hours till their life's race
was run.

Then Captain Moore he came on deck and said to us, his men,
"There is gold and silver to be had if with me you'll remain.
We'll hoist aloft the pirate flag and scour the Spanish Main."

We all agreed but five of us who were asked to be put on land,
Two of them were Boston boys and two from Newfoundland.
The other was an Irish youth who had sailed out from Tramore.
How I wished to God I had joined those boys and returned
with them to shore.

Now the Flying Cloud was as clever a ship as ever swam the
seas

Or ever hoisted a main topsail before a lively breeze.

I have often seen that gallant ship as the wind lay abaft
her wheel

With her royal and sky sails set aloft, taking nineteen
from her keel.

We robbed and plundered many a ship down on the Spanish Main,
Caused many the poor widow and orphan child in sorrow to
remain.

We made their crews to walk our planks and they hung out
from our sails,

For the saying of our skipper was that a dead man tells no
tales.

We were pursued by frigates and ships of the Lion, too,
It was always far astern of us their bursting shells they
threw,

It was always far astern of us their cannon boomed aloud,
There was many tried, but all in vain, to catch the Flying
Cloud.

Till at last the Spanish man-of-war, the Dungeon, hove in
view;

She fired a shot across our bow as a signal to heave to.
We paid to her but little heed and ran before the wind,
When a chain-shot cut our main-mast down and then we fell
behind.

We cleared our decks for action as they hauled up alongside,
And right across our quarterdeck they poured a leaden tide.
We fought till Captain Moore was shot and eighty of his men,
When a chain-shot set our ship on fire, we were forced to
surrender then.

We were taken prisoners, into a prison cast,
To be tried and found guilty and to be hung at last.
It was drinking and bad company that made this wreck of me;
Have pity on my fate, my boys, and curse this piracy.

Here's adieu unto that colleen fair, the girl I left behind;
Her heart would break if she knew I have come to this sad end.
No more will I kiss her ruby lips or hold her lily-white hand.
On the gallows high now I must die by the laws of the Spanish
land.

Side II; Band 1. THE TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY

These verses were written during the depression of the
'thirties by a group of men, including Tom's brother Everett,
who were working on "The Trans-Canada Highway" in northern Ontario.
The highway, which was not finally completed until 1962, had been
worked on intermittently for thirty or forty years, and during the
depression some stretches were constructed as projects to provide
work for the unemployed. The gang who made up this song were
working around Schreiber on the northern shore of Lake Superior
about 1933.

The Bennett mentioned in the second stanza was R. B. Bennett,
the Prime Minister of Canada from 1930 to 1935. As he came into
power at the depth of the depression, he was the general target

for the same sort of jibes that greeted Hoover in the States. For example, when the western farmers could no longer buy gas to run their cars, they hitched up teams of horses to draw their Model T's and called them "Bennett Buggies". The "C. P. excursions" mentioned in the third stanza is a reference to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The boss said, "Aboard, boys, it's twenty to eight;
If you don't want to work, you can catch the next freight.
So pick up your shovels, there's work to be done;
If you won't use a shovel, you can go on the bum."

It's hailing, it's raining, but during the day
The Lord works with Bennett to keep clouds away.
Now if I had Bennett where Bennett's got me,
The very next morning he'd be weak at the knees.

A year has gone by, boys, since I came on this road
And the weight of my savings is a terrible load.
I'd go on a trip, lads, and all would be fine,
But the C. P. excursions cost more than a dime.

I remember 'way back, boys, about three or four years,
When there was no depression and we drank lots of beer,
But those years have gone by, boys, and the wages are low,
If I don't get gum rubbers, I'll be freezing my toes.

But I can't get gum rubbers the way things are now,
For rubbers cost money and I have none, I vow.
Ten dollars a month, lads, I could spend that on beer,
But I gave it to Crowley and I'll lose it, I fear.

In years that's to come, boys, you'll hear some folks say:
"The depression was awful; we worked for no pay."
But when will that be, boys? If you should ask me,
My beard will be growing right down to my knees.

Now all you young fellows with hearts brave and true
Who work on the highway 'cause it's all you can do,
If you want a fortune while working this way,
Just listen to me, lads, and hear what I say.

Don't smoke no tobacco, for it takes the dimes
And dimes are like dollars in these rough times,
And if you don't eat, lads, that's four bits a day
To go to the bank with, there'll be no board to pay.

We all love the girls, boys, they're the prides of our heart,
If you want to save money, with them you must part.
If you buy a soft drink it will cost you five cents,
And one for the girl friend makes double expense.

Now we get to the clothes — they're things we don't need,
For Adam had none, lads, and neither did Eve.
So why should we wear them? They're useless expense;
If you even leave socks off, you'll save fifty cents.

Just go in the bush, boys, with stones from the grade,
And each kill a bear, if you're not too afraid.
Dress up in his skin and soon you will find
No matter how cold, boys, I'm sure you'll not mind.

Now that's my advice, lads, you can take it or not,
And if you don't take it, you'll be here till you rot.
I'll finish this song, boys, and so make it rhyme,
I say twenty-one years is a mighty long time.

Side II; Band 2. THE ROCK ISLAND LINE

While "The Rock Island Line" is typical of many North American ballads describing poor working conditions, this particular one is comparatively rare. Norman Cazden, who prints a version of it from the Catskills (I, pp. 52-3; note, p. 121), says that "other versions seem to be known only in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia" and suggests that it circulated in the lumbercamps, which also accounts for it turning up in Ontario. In Nova Scotia, Helen Creighton gives it as "The Fox River Line" and notes that it was sung all over the province where the words were changed to suit the locality (pp. 252-3).

Mr. Cazden suggests a relationship to the much more widespread "State of Arkansas" (H 1). Both have a similar theme and flavor, but they appear to be two quite distinct songs. It should also be noted that there is no connection between this song and the Lead-belly one with the same title which was popularized by the Weavers some years ago.

Both Catskill and Nova Scotia versions are quite close to the one Tom sings. The Catskill version, which was collected from George Edwards, has stanzas paralleling 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 in Tom's version. However, his stanzas 3, 4, and 10, 11, and 12 do not appear in the other versions — instead, they both conclude with some comment on the local girls and a shindig held on the Rock Island (or Fox River) Line.

Among the similarities in the Catskill and Ontario versions are the naming of St. Louis and April the tenth, and of Billy Hughes, while Brocky Connor is given there as Brocky Collins. There the corresponding names end, however, for Edwards had "Old Snyder" where Tom mentions Crowley, and Edwards reverted to Brocky Collins where Tom names Billy Thomas. It thus appears that Tom's song had been at least partially adapted to a different work crew. It is interesting to note that the name Crowley turns up in a somewhat similar context in "The Trans-Canada Highway". Tom learned "The Rock Island Line" from his eldest brother, Jack.

I arrived in St. Louis on April the tenth,
Three weeks in that city for pleasure I spent.
While perusing newspapers I happened to find
Advertisement for men on the Rock Island Line.

There's Fenians, Bohemians, Norwegians and Jews
All walking down Broadway to see Billy Hughes.
A chip and a quarter a ticket you'll find
That will forward you on to the Rock Island Line.

I went down to the dock all ready to ship
On the steamship Old Eagles to make the round trip,
Calculating to reach Saskaholia on time,
There to deadhead a freight for the Rock Island Line.

We reached Saskaholia all on the same day,
Straight to old Greensworth we then made our way.
"To take on more men I don't feel inclined,
For we're loaded with men on the Rock Island Line."

I went down to the station next morning at eight,
It was there that the agent said, "My man, you're too late.
There's a train that left here at a quarter past nine
And it's loaded with men for the Rock Island Line.

"But to please your desire I'll do all that I can
For I see by your face you're a hard-working man.
Go down to headquarters and there you will find
Brocky Connor's hotel on the Rock Island Line."

We started to work on the first day of May,
A buck and a quarter I heard was the pay.
After working three weeks I summed up my time;
I was scarce out of debt on the Rock Island Line.

I left Brocky Connor's, the place of my board,
And shouldered my turkey to walt on the road.
Went working for Crowley, that worthless divine
With his big Number 2s on the Rock Island Line.

Now there's old Billy Thomas, you'll all know him well,
For cursing and swearing there's few men excell.
He's a fat-bellied Dutchman from over the Rhine
And he runs the mud pit on the Rock Island Line.

He will stand on the bank and his teamsters he'll scold,
"Come turn 'round your horses, now back up and load;
Now do as I tell you or else take your time
And skedaddle to hell from the Rock Island Line."

The men struck for wages; the contractor said,
"What damn foolish notions they get in their head!
The work can stand still till the devil goes blind;
I won't raise it one cent on the Rock Island Line."

"The grub here is rotten," the men they all said,
"If you work long for Crowley, you soon will be dead."
So I'll shoulder my turkey and draw up my time
And bid fond adieu to the Rock Island Line.

Side II; Band 3. THE CROPPY BOY

"The Croppy Boy" is one of the many Irish rebel songs springing from the famous rising of 1798. It exists in many slightly different versions, most of which tell how a young man is arrested by English soldiers after being betrayed by a vindictive girl, and sentenced to death while his family grieves. It was frequently printed on ballad sheets and in songsters in Britain and America, and has previously been reported from tradition in Nova Scotia, Missouri, and Minnesota (Laws II, p. 135).

Galvin tells us: "The term croppy has a much disputed derivation, some referring it to the cropped ears of convicted felons (any political action was felony in Ireland), some to the pitch-cap torture applied to rebels, others to the 'democratic' haircut favored by the supporters of the French Revolution, others to the fact that only the lower orders wore their hair short, and others again to the ancient Gaelic hair-style of a short square-cut bob with a fringe. The probability is that the term includes all of these connotations, since all of them are factually applicable to the rebel patriot Irish. 'Croppy' is a sort of linguistic cluster uniting several strands of history in a single word" (pp. 22-3).

Some versions have stanzas mentioning other members of the family: his father, brother, sister, and mother, and usually it is the father who gives him the name of the croppy boy. Sometimes a stanza like this occurs:

"My sister, Mary, in deep distress,
She ran downstairs in her morning dress.
Five hundred pounds she would lay down
To see me walking through Wexford town."

Tom remembers his mother singing about the sister running downstairs "in her morning dress", but he could not fit it in. He seems to have the parts about the sister and the cousin slightly confused, for other versions which have the cousin betraying him usually run:

"My own first cousin did me betray
And for one bare guinea swore my life away" (Galvin, p. 23),

thus indicating that she betrayed him for a guinea reward.

The stanza about the colors is not common, although a somewhat similar one occurs in Walton's 152 Best Irish Songs and Ballads, p. 11.

It was early, early in the spring,
The birds did whistle and sweetly sing,
Changing their notes from tree to tree,
And the song they sang was "Old Ireland Free."

It was early, early in the night
The yeoman cavalry gave me a fright;
The yeoman cavalry was my downfall
And I was taken prisoner by Lord Cornwall.

'Twas in the guardhouse where I was laid
And in his parlor where I was tried;
My sentence passed and my courage low,
When to Dungannon I was forced to go.

As I was walking up Wexford Street
My cousin Mary I chanced to meet;
Five hundred guineas she did lay down
To see me hung in Wexford town.

As I was walking up Wexford hill,
Who could blame me to sit and cry my fill?
This false young lady did me deny
And the name she gave me was the croppy boy.

Now I'll choose the red and I'll choose the blue,
I'll choose the pink and the orange, too,
And all these colors I will deny,
And I'll wear the green of the croppy boy.

It was in Dungannon this young man died
And in Dungannon his body lies,
And you good people that do pass that way,
Oh, shed a tear for the croppy boy.

Side II; Band 4. KEVIN BARRY

This is one of the most recent and most popular of Ireland's many rebel songs, commemorating one of the last patriots to die for Ireland's freedom.

In 1914 the British government had finally agreed to grant Home Rule to Ireland, but when World War I broke out, it was again postponed. Embittered by the many delays, the Irish nationalists attempted to establish a republic through the Easter Rebellion of 1916. This failed, but in 1920 the Republic was again proclaimed in Dublin. In a final effort to suppress it, the English government sent in the troops who became infamous as "Black and Tans" (from their uniform of Black tunic and tan knee britches). Finally in 1921 Britain recognized De Valera's Free State and Ireland's long martyrdom came to an end. But before that day arrived, young Kevin Barry had become the symbol of Ireland's martyred youth — "the first Irish patriot to be hanged in Ireland since Robert Emmett, 117 years before" (Galvin, p. 67).

An eighteen year old student at Dublin's Trinity College, Kevin had enlisted in the Irish Republican Army and become involved in an ambush in which a British soldier was killed. Dominic Behan, himself an active IRA member in more recent times, tells us that "Barry hid under a bread van outside Thompson's Bakery in Dublin. The British soldiers searching for him had almost passed him by when an old woman (fearing that Barry might be injured when the van moved off) cried out an alarm resulting in his capture" (note on Riverside album RLP 12-820).

Barry was hanged in Dublin's Mountjoy Jail on November 1, 1920, and the song composed shortly after by an unknown author has kept his memory green wherever Irishmen are found. Behan says it "is probably the best known of all Irish rebel songs", and Sandburg reports its popularity "among Irish boys and girls in Chicago" (p. 42). Ironically enough, the rebellious lines are set to the tune of an old British sea song, "Rolling Home to Dear Old England".

The Dublin Museum has a section devoted to relics of the heroes of the resistance, and it includes some of the personal effects of young Kevin Barry. The title page of one of his school books bears this inscription: "K. G. Barry — a decided menace to the British Empire, captured 20th Sept. 1920. Tried 20th Oct. 1920. Hanged 1st Nov. 1921. Up the prisoners of war. Amongst the many crimes put down to this dangerous man is that he did put pepper in the cat's milk and steal a penny from a blind man, beside wilfully, feloniously, and of his malice aforethought smiling derisively at a policeman." Also a letter he wrote from Mountjoy Gaol to Alice Boland, one of his fellow students, said, in part: "As to your anxious query re my hirsute adornments, I beg to report the appearance on my upper lip of 12 silky hairs. Not very encouraging, but hope springs eternal, etc. I have reformed my life, given up wine, women, dancing, higher Chemistry and Biology. Also work of every description. You will understand what the latter circumstance means to me."

Tom remembers his father singing this song, although he learned it from his brother, Everett. It is fairly close to such Irish versions as O'Lachlainn's (pp. 98-9) except that they usually begin "In Mountjoy Jail one Monday morning". The last line of the second stanza normally runs: "Turn informer and we'll free you", and the "December morn" of the third stanza was actually "September".

To my sorrows, Monday morning, high upon the gallows tree,
Kevin Barry gave his young life for the cause of liberty.
Just a lad of eighteen summers, which is no man can deny,
As he marched to death last Monday, proudly held his head
up high.

Just before he faced the hangman in his dark and dreary cell
English soldiers tortured Barry just because he would not tell
All the names of his brave comrades, all the things they
wished to know.

"Come before us, we will free you." Kevin Barry answered, "No."

"Shoot me like an Irish soldier and don't hang me like
a dog,
For I fought to free old Ireland on that cold December
morn,
All around the little bakeshop where we fought them hand
to hand;
Shoot me like an Irish soldier, for I fought to free this
land."

Kevin dear, you're going to leave us; on the gallows
you must die,"
Cried his broken-hearted mother as she kissed her son
goodby.
Kevin turned to her in silence, saying, "Mother, do not
weep,
For I fought to free old Ireland and I'll die for Ireland's
sake."

Side II; Band 5. PATRICK SHEEHAN

The ballad of "Patrick Sheehan" was written by the Irish poet and novelist, Charles Joseph Kickham (1826-1882) who is best known for his novel Knockagow, or The Homes of Tipperary published in 1879. Kickham, who was born in Tipperary, was active in the "Young Ireland" movement and became a Fenian about 1860, serving as one of the editors of the newspaper, The Irish People. When the Fenian rising failed he was arrested and tried for treason in 1865. Sentenced to fourteen years, he was released after serving four years, and in 1870 published material he had written in prison as Poems, Sketches, and Narratives Illustrative of Irish Life.

"Patrick Sheehan", inspired by the Crimean War (1853-6), is rare in North American tradition, but it is quite popular in Ireland where it appears in many broadsides and songsters. Laws notes only two versions collected by Phillips Barry and Dean (II, p. 133). It falls in the large class of Irish ballads telling of the hard fortune of Irishmen serving in foreign wars ("Johnny, I Hardly Knew You", "Mrs. McGrath", "Nine Years a Soldier", etc.), but whereas most of the others have an ironic or satiric flavor, here the tone is sentimental and self-pitying. It is also akin to another large group of Irish ballads telling how the poor Irishmen were driven from their homes by the landlords and the sheriffs, as for example, "Dear Old Skibbereen".

According to Joyce, "Galtymore" in the first line stands for the Irish name of the Galty Mountains, sliabh-na-gColiteadh moir — "great wooded mountain", located in the counties of Limerick and Tipperary. Aherlow, at the foot of these mountains, is the Irish eatharlach, meaning glen or valley (Irish Names of Places, iii, 357; 1, 35).

Tom remembered his mother singing this ballad and sang a

fragmentary version for me. The stanza which had stuck in his memory was the one describing the blinding of Sheehan (the fifth). Although he remembered some lines from other stanzas, he could not put them together. Finally I showed him a text and from it he selected the stanzas he remembered his mother singing and thus produced the version given here. The original contained an additional stanza between the first and third and three final stanzas telling how Sheehan became a wandering beggar after his discharge.

I have found no other trace of this ballad in Ontario. However, at least three other Crimean War ballads were current here: "The Crimean War" (J 9), "The Heights of Alma" (J 10), which may be heard on Folkways FM 4051, and "Sir Charles Lapier", which may be heard on Prestige International 25014.

My name is Patrick Sheehan, my years are thirty four,
Tipperary is my native place, not far from Galtymore.
I came of honest parents, but now they're lying low,
And many a pleasant day I spent in the Glen of Aherlow.

My father died, I closed his eyes outside our cabin door.
The landlord and the sheriff, too, were there the day before,
And then my poor loving mother and sisters three also
Were forced to go with broken hearts from the Glen of Aherlow.

Bereft of home, of kith and kin, with plenty all around,
I starved within my cabin and slept upon the ground;
But cruel as my lot was, I ne'er did hardship know
Till I joined the English army, far away from Aherlow.

"Rouse up there!" says the corporal, "you lazy Irish hound!
Why don't you hear, you sleepy dog, the call 'To Arms' sound?"
Alas, I had been dreaming of those days of long ago;
I woke up in Sebastapol and not in Aherlow.

I groped to find my musket — how dark I thought the night!
O blessed God! It was not dark — 'twas in the broad daylight!

And when I found that I was blind, my tears began to flow;
I longed for even a pauper's grave in the Glen of Aherlow.

Oh, blessed Virgin Mary, mine is a mournful tale,
A poor blind prisoner here I am in Dublin's dreary jail,
Struck blind within the trenches where I never feared the foe,
And now I'll never see again my own sweet Aherlow.

Side II; Band 6. THE BLARNEY STONE

In A Treasury of Irish Folklore, Padraic Colum tells us:
"The famous Blarney Castle and the magic Blarney Stone with its traditional power of conferring eloquence on all who kiss it are known to the world. The word "Blarney" has long found a place

in the English Dictionary and is supposed to have originated of Queen Elizabeth's government with the then Lord of Blarney, Cormac MacDermott Carthy. Repeatedly he was asked by the Queen's deputy, Carew, to renounce the traditional system by which the clans elected their chiefs and to take the tenure of his lands from the Crown. But while seeming to agree with this proposal, he put off the fulfillment of the promise from day to day 'with fair words and soft speech', until Elizabeth declared 'this is all Blarney; what he says he never means.' Thus 'Blarney' came to mean pleasant talk intended to deceive without offending". (p. 568)

Blarney has inspired many Irish songs, for example, "The Blarney Roses", "The Groves of Blarney" by R. A. Milliken, and two different ones entitled simply "The Blarney" by Samuel Lover and S. C. Hall. However, the best known song of this type is "The Blarney Stone", often listed as "The Road to Bandon", written by Seamus Kavanagh.

Bandon is in southwestern Ireland in the County of Cork. In Tom's version it has not unnaturally been transformed into "Brandon". While Tom's version parallels the usual stanzas, there are many minor changes of wording which indicate the influence of oral tradition. For example, the chorus as written ran:

"There's a Blarney stone in Kerry, there's a Blarney stone
in Clare,
There's a Blarney stone in Wicklow — and there's plenty
in Kildare,
There's a Blarney stone in Leitrim and another in Tyrone,
Sure the divil a town in Ireland but you'll find the
Blarney stone."

Tom picked this song up from various Irishmen he heard singing it in pubs.

It was by the town of Brandon one morning last July
I spied an Irish colleen and she winked as she passed by.
Said I, "I am from Galway, I'm lonesome and alone.
Would you kindly tell me where I'd find the Blarney Stone?"

Chorus:

Said she, "There's a Blarney stone in Kelly, there's a
Blarney stone in Clare,
There's a Blarney stone in Dublin, there's plenty at Kildare,
There's a Blarney stone in Wigelow (Wicklow) and a big one
in Athlone,
And there's devil a town in Ireland but you'll find the
Blarney stone."

Said she, "I know you are from Galway, I can tell that by
your brogue,
For I never saw a Galway man that was an awful rogue,
But seeing you're a stranger where the River Shannon flows,
Well, the only Blarney stone you'll find is underneath
your nose.

Chorus —

So then her Irish smile had broadened and she winked her
roguish eye,
My heart had started pumping and I thought I'd surely die
Till I rolled her in my arms and she never gave a moan,
Then I kissed the blooming roses from the Brandon Blarney
stone.

Chorus —

Side II; Band 7. MY BONNY BLACK BESS

This ballad about England's Dick Turpin ranks with the one celebrating Ireland's Willie Brennan as the two most popular ballads about British highwaymen on this side of the Atlantic. It is fairly widespread: Laws reports versions from Arkansas, North Carolina, Michigan, Texas, and Nova Scotia (II, p. 170), and I have recorded three other versions in Ontario. (To these add New York, where it is sung by Lawrence Older of Middle Grove, soon to be released on Folk-Legacy's FSA-15. Ed. note)

Richard (Dick) Turpin (1706-1739) was the son of an English alehouse keeper who began his career while apprenticed to a butcher. In danger of being arrested while stealing cattle, he escaped to join a gang of smugglers and later turned to house-breaking and highway robbery. It was as a highwayman that he won his fame — the folk were delighted to hear of his clever escapades which were naturally directed against the wealthy. Like most other outlaw heroes, he was actually a very commonplace ruffian who has been glamorized in the Robin Hood tradition. He seems to owe his fame largely to a romantic novel by William Harrison Ainsworth whose boyhood was spent in the very countryside where some of Turpin's robberies were committed. In Rockwood, published in 1834, Ainsworth presents Turpin as the hero and describes his famous though apparently apocryphal ride from London to York. The spot where his famous black mare is supposed to have sunk exhausted to the ground is still pointed out on the York race course, but no evidence of the mare's existence has been uncovered. However, we do know that Turpin was hanged for horse-stealing at York on April 8, 1739.

Several ballads dealing with Turpin's exploits and his famous ride were current in eighteenth-century Britain. One of these, "Turpin and the Lawyer" (L 10), seems to have been more popular than "My Bonny Black Bess" in England. It was originally part of a longer ballad which began with Turpin's

encounter with the lawyer and then went on to describe similar experiences with an exciseman and a judge, passed from these to a lament, and closed with an account of the hanging that ended Turpin's career. The first part, which is all that has survived in recent tradition, is usually identified in Britain as "Turpin Hero" or "O Rare Turpin". Still another ballad describing the famous ride has also survived in England (Williams, p. 101).

"My Bonny Black Bess" is one of the better broadsides, evoking considerable emotion and atmosphere, and conveying a fairly effective if romanticized picture of the daring outlaw. (The love of a man for his horse is a theme with sure-fire popular appeal, as the makers of many cowboy pictures have demonstrated in more recent times.) Some of the phrasing rises above the usual broadside cliché, notably the lines suggesting that the story will be handed down from father to son, as indeed it has been — a passage that echoes Shakespeare's more famous lines:

"How many ages hence
Shall this our lofty scene be acted o'er
In states unborn and accents yet unknown."

In Tom's version, which he learned from his father, oral tradition seems to have improved some of the wording of the broadsides, but in a couple of places the meaning has been obscured — the fifth stanza usually begins: "But hate darkens o'er me, despair is my lot", and "The dark hills of justice" is a corruption of "Argus-eyed justice".

When Fortune's kind goddess had left my abode
My friends proved unfaithful, so I took to the road
To plunder the wealthy and relieve my mistress,
I bought you to aid me, my bonny black Bess.

No vile whip or spur did your sides ever gall,
No line did I need, you would come at my call,
And for each act of kindness you did me caress,
You were never unfaithful, my bonny black Bess.

How quietly you stood while the coaches I stopped,
The gold and the jewelry from the inmates I took.
No poor man we robbed, or ever distressed
The widow or the orphan, my bonny black Bess.

When the dark hills of justice did us hotly pursue
From London to York like the lightning you flew.
No toll bar could hold you, broad rivers you'd breast;
In twelve hours you made it, my bonny black Bess.

When darkness came o'er me despising my lot,
The law does pursue me for the man I have shot,
The bloodhounds approach you but they never shall have
A beast like you, Betsy, so bold and so brave.
Now I must relieve you, though it does me oppress.
There! There! I have shot you, my bonny black Bess.

Now it's ages after ages when I'm dead and gone
This tale will be handed from father to son.
Some will have pity though all will confess
Through kindness I shot you, my bonny black Bess.

Now to conclude and to finish my song,
In the bosom of Turpin for the deeds I have done,
I'll die like a man and I'll soon be at rest,
So farewell forever, my bonny black Bess.

Side II; Band 8. JACK HAGGERTY

"Jack Haggerty" is one of the small group of lumberjack ballads whose origin can be pinned down to a definite time and place. Sometimes known as "The Flat River Girl", its setting is clearly the Flat River which flows through what was Michigan's great pine belt and empties into the Grand River near Lowell. It originated in the town of Greenville which in the 1860's was the center of lumbering activities. Beck tells us that 35 million feet of pine logs floated down the river in 1865-7, bound for Chicago and the middle west.

The story it tells wasn't true, but the characters in the ballad were real people. Geraldine Chickering's research uncovered the facts (Modern Language Notes, 35, pp. 365-8), and Beck summarizes them thus: "At the time it was composed Greenville was a small logging town and Anne Tucker's home was just across the street from her father's blacksmith shop. It seems that in the late 60's there wandered into Greenville a big burly red-headed Irishman named Dan McGinnis. He knew Jack Haggerty who came from Hart and Shelby and who is described as good-looking; he had black curly hair and a black moustache. Neither was permitted to keep company with pretty Anne Tucker. McGinnis, who was clever both as a raftsman and an entertainer, was assigned to a lumber camp where George Mercer, Anne's fiance, was promoted to woods boss. The promotion so aroused McGinnis that he composed this shanty song using Haggerty's name to conceal his identity; for a time the song humiliated the Tucker family and Mercer would not permit its being sung in camp. However, as sand passed through the hourglass, the family aversion wore away and Anne herself is said to have sung it to her Canadian friends" (p. 140).

Although the events are fictional, the story it tells was nevertheless close to shantyboy experience. The girls liked the roving shantyboys, but they usually married steadier types, and their parents weren't slow to point out that the roistering lumbermen seldom made good husbands. The opposition personified here by Anne's mother finds expression in the lumberjack rewrite of "The Roving Journeyman" — "Ye Maidens of Ontario" (or "Ye Maids of Simcoe") and also in an Ontario form of "The Bonny Laboring Boy" known as "The Jolly Shantyboy".

The ballad is naturally most common in Michigan. Indeed,

Beck notes that there "with the exception of 'The Jam on Gerry's Rocks' and possibly 'The Lumberjack's Alphabet', the story of Jack Haggerty and his girl is the best known of the shantyboy ballads" (p. 140) — and Rickaby quotes C. L. Clark of Greenville who wrote: "...Thousands of people hereabouts knew and sang the song and many knew the heroine" (p. 191).

It has also spread fairly widely — Eckstorm reports that "it was certainly known in Maine as early as 1890" (p. 125); Doerflinger notes that it "is a favorite of shantyboys from coast to coast" (p. 244); and it is very common in Ontario where I've recorded three other versions, one of which gives it a slightly different twist. As John Leahy sings it (Folkways FM 4052), the blacksmith's daughter becomes a locksmith's daughter, the dark chestnut curls become dark auburn curls, and the girl's name has been changed to Lucy. This is a more radical change than usual — other versions have Anne becoming Anna and Hanna and even Emma, but the change to Lucy suggests that some Ontario shantyboy may have adapted the song to fit a local situation.

Tom's text, which he learned from his brother Everett, is fairly close to the Michigan versions, although some of them are longer, running to eleven or twelve stanzas. For other references, see Laws I, pp. 157-8.

My name is Jack Haggerty, from Glensville I came,
There is no one to control me so there's no one to blame.
I'll tell you a story without no delay
Of a pretty young maiden who stole my heart away.

My name is Jack Haggerty, I'm a raftsmen by trade,
My name is engraved on the rocks and sandbars,
I'm the boy who stands high where the white water foams,
But the thoughts of dear Anna keeps crossing my mind.

She is one and I took her from the Flat River side,
I truly intended to make her my bride,
She's the blacksmith's daughter from the Flat River side,
And I truly intended to make her my bride.

I gave her fine silks and the nicest of lace,
The costliest of muslin herself to embrace,
I gave her my wages herself to keep,
I deprived her of nothing I had on this earth.

One day on Flat River a note I received
Saying dear Anna she had me deceived.
She had married another who had long been delayed
And the next time I met her she'd ne'er be a maid.

Now it's on her old mother I place all the blame,
She always intended to blacken my name,
She'd have soon broke the vows that God would have tied
Causing me for to wander till the day that I died.

So adieu to Flat River, for me there's no rest,
I'll shoulder my peavey and go to the west.
I'll go to Muskegon, some comfort to find,
Leaving Flat River and dear Anna behind.

So come all you young raftsmen with hearts kind and true,
Don't trust any woman, you're beat if you do,
And if you find one with those dark chestnut curls,
Just think of Jack Haggerty and his Flat River girl.

NOTE: References to the following songs may be found in
Laws I and II (see Bibliography):

THERE IS A LADY IN THIS TOWN (Q 2)

MUSKOKA (H 1)

THE MAID OF THE MOUNTAIN BROW (P 7)

THE LADY LEROY (N 5)

THE FLYING CLOUD (K 28)

THE CROPPY BOY (J 14)

PATRICK SHEEHAN (J 11)

MY BONNY BLACK BESS (L 9, II)

JACK HAGGERTY (C 25)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Belden, Henry Marvin; Ballads and Songs Collected by the
Missouri Folklore Society. Columbia: The University
of Missouri Studies, SV (No. 1), 1940.

Beck, Earl Clifton; Lore of the Lumber Camps. Ann Arbor:
University of Michigan Press, 1948.

Cazden, Norman; The Abelard Folk Song Book; I. Songs for
Every Day. II. Songs for Saturday Night. New York:
Abelard Shuman, 1958.

Colcord, Joanna C.; Songs of American Sailormen. New York:
W. W. Norton and Co., 1938.

Creighton, Helen; Songs and Ballads from Nova Scotia.
Toronto and Vancouver: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1933.

Dean, Michael C.; The Flying Cloud and One Hundred and
Fifty Other Old Time Songs and Ballads. Virginia,
Minnesota: The Quickprint, 1922.

Doerflinger, Wm. Main; Shantymen and Shantyboys: Songs of
the Sailor and Lumberman. New York: The MacMillan Co.,
1951.

Eckstorm, Fannie Hardy and Mary Winslow Smyth; Minstrelsy of Maine. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1927.

Galvin, Patrick; Irish Songs of Resistance. New York: The Folklore Press.

Gardner, Emelyn E. and Geraldine J. Chickering; Songs and Ballads of Southern Michigan. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1939.

Greenleaf, Elizabeth B. and Grace Mansfield; Ballads and Sea Songs from Newfoundland. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933.

JFSS: Journal of the Folk-Song Society. Published by the Folk Song Society, London, 1899-1931.

Journal of American Folklore. Published by the American Folklore Society, 1888--.

Laws, G. Malcolm, Jr.; I. Native American Balladry. Philadelphia: The American Folklore Society, 1950.
II. American Balladry from British Broadides. The American Folklore Society, 1957.

Lomax, John A. and Alan; Folk Song U.S.A. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1947.

Mackenzie, W. Roy; Ballads and Sea Songs from Nova Scotia. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928.

O Lachlainn, Colm; Irish Street Ballads (Revised Edition). Dublin: The Sign of the Three Candles, 1946.

Randolph, Vance and Floyd C. Shoemaker; Ozark Folksongs, 4 vols. Columbia: The State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-1950.

Rickaby, Franz; Ballads and Songs of the Shantyboy. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926.

Sandburg, Carl; The American Songbag. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1927.

Williams, Alfred; Folk Songs of the Upper Thames. London: Duckworth & Co., 1923.

FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC. was established in 1961 by Lee B. Haggerty, Mary W. Haggerty and Sandy Paton. Although we will, from time to time, issue records of exceptional "interpreters" of traditional music and tales, our primary purpose is to make good field recordings of authentic traditional artists available to the general public. Collectors with tapes of such artists are urged to contact the company. For additional information and catalogues, write:

FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC., SHARON, CONNECTICUT 06069

OTHER RECORDS AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME:

- FSA-1 — FRANK PROFFITT of Reese, North Carolina
 - FSA-2 — JOSEPH ABLE TRIVETT of Butler, Tennessee
 - FSA-3 — EDNA RITCHIE of Viper, Kentucky
 - FSI-4 — FLEMING BROWN ("Interpreters Series")
 - FSI-5 — HOWIE MITCHELL ("Interpreters Series")
 - FTA-6 — RICHARD CHASE tells three "Jack" tales
 - FSE-7 — PADDY TUNNEY of Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Eire
 - FSE-8 — PEG CLANCY POWER of Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary, Eire
 - FSC-9 — MARIE HARE of Strathadam, New Brunswick, Canada
 - FSC-10 — TOM BRANDON of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada
 - FSA-11 — MAX HUNTER of Springfield, Missouri
 - FSA-12 — EUGENE RHODES of Michigan City, Indiana (Blues)
 - FSA-13 — HANK FERGUSON of Lenoir City, Tennessee (Prison Songs)
 - FTA-14 — RAY HICKS of Beech Mountain, North Carolina (Jack tales)
 - FSA-15 — LAWRENCE OLDER of Middle Grove, New York
-

