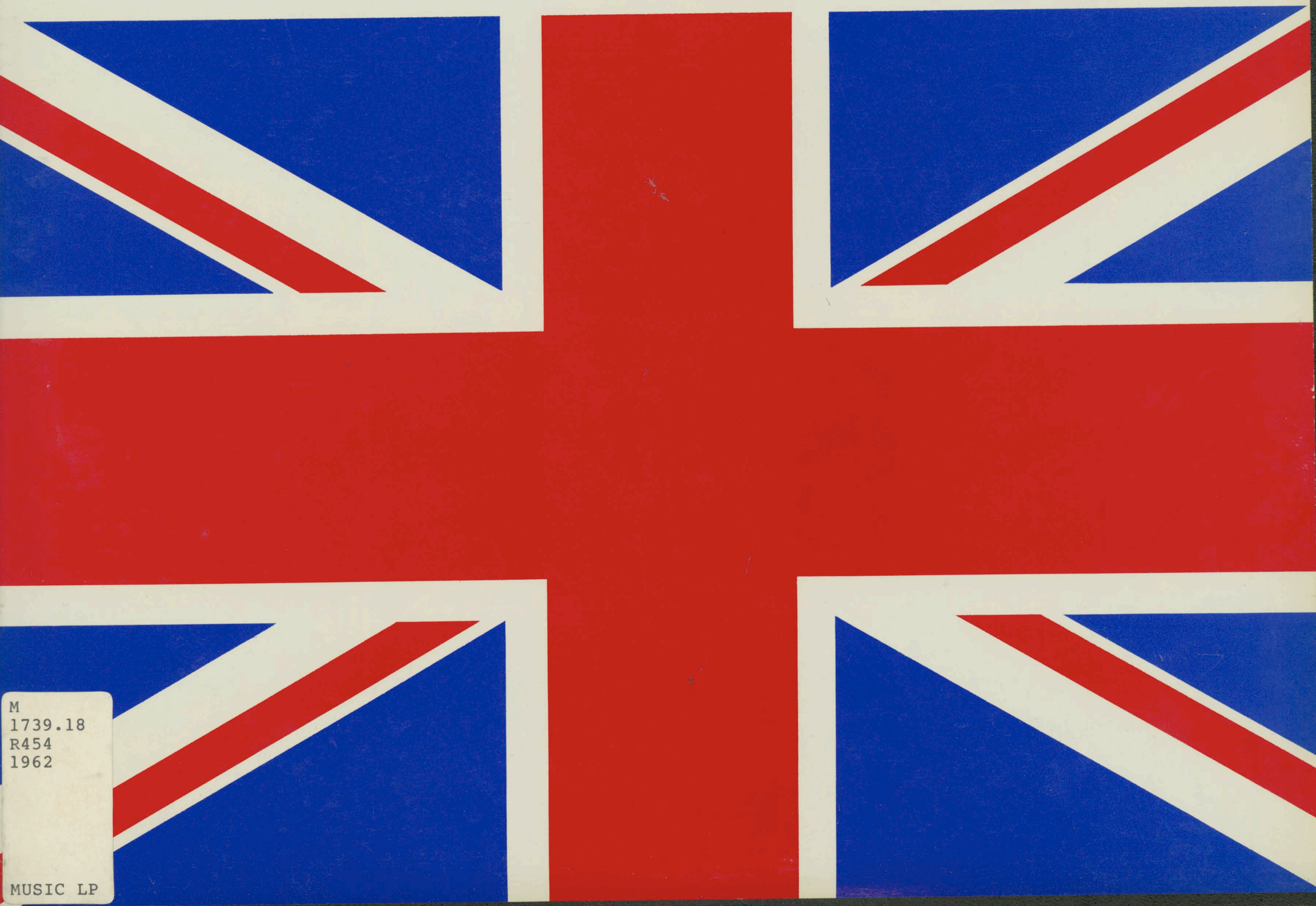


REVIVAL IN BRITAIN **VOLUME 1**

Edited by Ewan MacColl / Folkways Records FW 8728



M
1739.18
R454
1962

MUSIC LP

SIDE I

MATT MCGINN:

Band 1: O'ROURKE
 Band 2: UNDER ALOW THE GROUND
 Band 3: THE CAN O' TEA
 Band 4: MUMBO
 Band 5: RUM'LL HAE TO DO TODAY
 Band 6: TAM THE TOFF
 Band 7: I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR WHISKEY BACK AGAIN
 Band 8: THE HAUNTED SINGLE END
 Band 9: MY FATHER WAS BORN A HEBREW
 Band 10: THIS IS OUR LAND
 Band 11: THEY'LL NEITHER WORK NOR WANT
 Band 12: MY UNCLE DAN

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

SIDE II

STAN KELLY:

Band 1: LIVERPOOL TOWN
 Band 2: THE OLD MARK II
 Band 3: JOHNNY HANDLE AND LOU KILLEN:
 FAREWELL TO THE MONTY
JOHNNY HANDLE:
 Band 4: THE GAFFER'S BAIT
 Band 5: THE STONEMAN'S LAMENT
 Band 6: THE COLLIER LAD IS A CANNY LAD
ALAN ROGERSON:
 Band 7: THE COLLEGE VALLEY HUNT
ENOCH KENT:
 Band 8: CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR
 Band 9: THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE KNOB
 Band 10: OUR COMMONWEALTH BROTHERS
CHARLES PARKER:
 Band 11: NO ROOM AT THE INN

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG NUMBER R62-1246

REVIVAL IN BRITAIN Folkways Records FW 8728

BRITISH FOLKSONG REVIVAL

sung by Mattt McGinn, Alan Rogerson, Enoch Kent,
Johnny Handle, Stan Kelly, Charles Parker

(in which are presented some of the new writers who have appeared on the scene of the British Folksong Revival.)

The British popular revival of interest in folk-music dates roughly from 1950. Prior to that date there existed the English Folk Dance and Song Society but this organization was more concerned with the collecting and preservation of folksongs than with their popularization. Their existed also a handful of enthusiasts scattered throughout the country and it is to them that the popular revival owes most of its direction and encouragement. A good deal of this direction has been exerted through the media of BBC radio programmes and the occasional television series.

The skiffle movement, which in 1953 burst onto the British musical scene with explosive violence, marked the first stage of the popular revival and it was during that period that the basic of the 'folk club' idea was laid. The musical diet of the skiffle movement was, at first, exclusively American and, to a large extent, limited to the songs of Leadbelly and Guthrie. Later, Scots and English songs began to filter into the skiffle repertoire but only after they had undergone considerable rhythmical adaptation and had been translated into the Anglo-American idiom. To hear the 'Barnyards of Delgaty' sung by young cocknies in the carefully acquired accents of Arkansas and Brooklyn was an experience, that none of us who were fortunate enough to be on the scene during that period will easily forget.

The skiffle movement was not an isolated phenomenon but a stage of the folk revival and its decline coincided with the growth of the urban folk clubs. At first the clubs differed little from their skiffle forebears, the accent was still predominantly trans-Atlantic, the repertoire, though somewhat extended, was still American, as was the prevailing guitar-type accompaniment. The only notable change was one of emphasis, for whereas skiffle had relied on the ensemble performance, the folk clubs tended to rely on the solo, self-accompanied singer.

Changes were, however, taking place and by 1956 an increasingly large number of new young singers were turning to the domestic repertoire. The majority of them, it is true, were imitators of established British singers rather than performers in their own right, but they were, nevertheless, beginning to grapple valiantly with the English, Scots and Irish repertory and, more important, they were beginning to explore the mysteries of native singing styles.

Not all the young singers who were attracted to the folk revival in that period have continued to follow their original path, some have found it simpler to revert to the hybrid skiffle-folk style of the immediate past, others have found their way into those border regions where 'pop' and folk music carry on a somewhat embarrassing courtship. In spite of everything, a surprisingly large number have managed to come to terms with the traditional material without reducing it to the level of cute slop. That number is constantly growing and the newest recruits appear to have no difficulty whatsoever in accepting their traditional music. As recently as five years ago any young singer able to sing a traditional ballad was considered something of a freak; today they are as common as were Leadbelly imitators in the mid-fifties.

The change in repertoire has been accompanied by a change in singing style, the synthetic-American accents of the days of skiffle are now definitely passe; they are still heard in some of the clubs but the more discriminating members of the new generation of folksong enthusiasts tend to regard them as 'squares'. Another important change which has taken place during the last two or three years is the matter of accompaniments; some of the most talented among the revival singers have begun to abandon the guitar as an accompanying instrument and have turned to the concertina, melodeon and fiddle, while still others have returned to the indigenous unaccompanied singing style.

On the purely creative side, the development of the revival has been no less spectacular. New songs and new writers have been forthcoming at every stage of progress.

At first, as was to be expected, the new 'folksongs' were, with a few notable exceptions, either parodies of American folksongs and blues or, alternatively, songs and ballads conceived (for skiffle performance) in the Guthrie pattern. The second stage produced a number of songs patterned on the Irish come-all-ye's. These for the most part were uneasily self-conscious pieces, mechanical in form and didactic in intention. The stimulus which gave impetus to their production was the desire to prove that the new 'folksongs', like the old ones, were true reflections of the contemporary scene. Almost without exception, the themes of the songs of this period appear to have been chosen exclusively on the basis of their topicality rather than as a result of a deep human response to events or ideas. They deal with disasters like the aeroplane crash in which several members of an English football team met their deaths, with the fire at Smithfield market where a number of firemen died in the course of their duty, with the 'good stories' of the popular press. There is, of course, no reason, why such 'good stories' should not provide the raw material for good songs. In this case they did not, the competent journalism of the newspapers was reduced to doggerel verse and the whole effect was one of bathos.

Scores of new songs have made their appearance since then, their themes cover a wide range of human activities and concepts. Love, death, politics, capital punishment, "the bomb", nationalist aspirations, economic conditions, religious attitudes and ideas, etc., are subjects dear to the hearts of the new generation of "makers". It would seem that the best songs being made are the work of authors who can best be described as 'committed' men and women - committed in the sense that they are conscious of their roles in contemporary society and identify themselves with a specific social, political or religious ideal.

The editors do not claim that this collection of 'songs of the emerging tradition' is a definitive one or that it covers the best work of all the best new writers. It is a personal choice and, like any personal choice, reflects the likes and the dislikes of the choosers. They do say, however, that everyone represented here is seriously involved in attempting to create an image which will be a truthful reflection of the time in which they live.

Peggy Seeger and Ewen MacColl

M
1739.18
R454
1962

MUSIC LP

1. MATT MCGINN

Born 1928 in the Gallowgate district of Glasgow; father a labourer in the meat market, mother a gut-scaper, both parents of Irish descent. MacGinn, one of nine children, was evacuated during the war to Newton-Mearns and returned to the Gallowgate during a peak period of juvenile delinquency. "The Gallowgate had always been a rough, tough district but now all Hell was let loose. There was very little real reason for us who lived in the Gallowgate to be respectful of authority. Of sixteen of us in my age group, nine of us were put into approved schools. I myself had two convictions for housebreaking. I was in the school for eighteen months...it was run by Catholic brothers. It didn't have a good effect on me. Most of us like a little respect of some kind and you're not given a great deal of respect in a place like that. I was very religious at the time and I prayed every night; I prayed for my da (father), my ma...I prayed for everybody and I always finished up with a prayer for myself: God, get me out of this bloody place. God, however, didn't intervene before my time was up."

McGinn returned to the Gallowgate at the age of 14, and worked as a labourer in an iron foundry, as a messenger in a flower-shop, in a lemonade factory, in a soap works, in a banana warehouse, as a bartender in a railway refreshment-room, as a tailor's presser and as a building-labourer. At the age of 18 he was called-up to serve his period of military-service in the army.

During this period he began to study anarchist writers and, later, Darwin and Marx. He confesses to having spent the greater part of his military-service in the guard-room for various acts of insubordination. He was finally discharged on medical grounds and for the next six years worked at various jobs, navvying (pick-and-shovel work), working as a porter in a whiskey bond (warehouse): "I worked there with a bloke called Big Charlie. He was a labourer but he'd read a Hell of a lot. I learned a lot from Charlie."

Round about this time McGinn got married and he and his wife moved into a single-end (a one-roomed house) in Rutherglen. McGinn dates his trade-union activities from this time. He worked as a labourer in various ship-yards but his brand of militant trade-unionism made him unpopular with his employers and he was constantly forced to change his job. While working as a machine-operator in an



engineering shop he won a trade-union scholarship to Ruskin College, Oxford where he studied and took a degree in economics; he later enrolled at a teachers' training-college where he won his teaching diploma. He recalls his Oxford experiences with a great deal of pleasure but it is evident that the 'mother of universities' proved unequal to the task of taming this 'gallus chiel'. That he has benefited from the discipline of university training cannot be denied but it is the Gallowgate

which provides the main stimulus for his muse. He has been writing stories and poems about the Gallowgate for the last ten years; his songwriting activities, however, only began some four years ago.

McGinn's songs fall into two categories: (a) songs written in the folk-idiom. (b) songs inspired by the Glasgow music-hall tradition. He appears to work with equal facility in both genres. The themes of his songs cover a wide range of subjects - racial intolerance, Scottish Nationalism, the 'bomb', economic struggles, etc., are all grist to MacGinn's mill but his favourite theme is the uncompromising class outlook of Glasgow working folk and it is in the songs which deal with this that McGinn is at his most brilliant. For one who has had little or no exposure to folk-music his ability to make traditional-sounding tunes is extraordinary while his knack of crystallising, in a single phrase, the social attitudes of a community is almost uncanny. His epic ballad of 'O'Rourke' was awarded first place in the recent National Song Writing Competition sponsored by Reynold's News, one of Britain's oldest Sunday newspapers. In the opinion of the editors of this album it is the most perfect song of its type to come out of the revival.

The humour and irony which run through all of McGinn's songs belong to the Gallowgate as does the smouldering anger which underlies them but the love, which serves as a base for the anger, belongs to McGinn. It is his contribution to the class and the place which formed him.

ALAN ROGERSON

Born Near Wooler, Northumberland, 1915. Parents, farmers. Rogerson, a sheep farmer, lives and works at Commonburn Farm in that part of Northumberland which was once termed 'the debatable land'. Like most fell farmers he is kept busy with his sheep and his border-collies but, once in a while, takes time off to visit the pub in Wooler where he will sometimes sing a couple of songs. His 'College Valley Hunt' is based on a Cumberland hunting song 'The Elterwater Hounds' and is a great improvement on the original.

ENOCH KENT

Born 1912 in the City of Glasgow. Father, for many years, worked as a municipal tram-driver but now works in a Glasgow ship-yard. Enoch won a scholarship to the Glasgow Art School and there studied design. He began singing folk-songs when he was 19 years old. "Of course, I did a bit of singing before that but it was mostly rubbish that I sang. I only began singing seriously when I was 19."

Kent was 'discovered' during the skiffle period of the revival and was signed up by one of the main British recording companies. In the process of being groomed for the hit-parade, he discovered that he was expected to sing with a 'heavenly choir' and a 'front-line combo of six guitars'. "The money was good but the work was lousy," he says, "so I packed it in and came to London." He earns his living by working as a designer for an advertising-agency in London's West-end. In the evenings and at week-ends he can be found singing at one or another of the London folk-clubs. He is regarded as one of the best singers of the British revival and a magnificent repertoire of traditional ballads, country songs, Glasgow street songs and contemporary pieces which he himself writes.

Of his song-writing activities he says: "I just take the notion every so often." There is, however, nothing of the dilettante in his attitude to work for he is a careful craftsman and discards a good fifty-per-cent of the songs he writes. Like the majority of revival song-writers he is solidly anti-establishment. His most successful songs are those in which he gives full reign to his keenly-developed sense of satire. His humour is not the



kind which produces belly-laughs, it is too savage for that, too loaded with the sense of outrage. He uses it with the same deadly effect that some of his fellow citizens achieve with a razor.

His songs, though nearly always 'topical', are never of the pastiche 'Come All Ye' type, they are carefully considered pieces and even his most light-hearted creations are built around a core of tough logic. In the opinion of the editors of this album he ranks as one of the three or four most important contemporary British songwriters.

JOHNNY HANDLE (Johnny Pandrich)

Born 1935 in Wallsend, Northumberland. Father a schoolmaster. From the time he was a child, Pandrich was fascinated by rocks and minerals and spent a good deal of his spare time 'prospecting' in Northumberland and on the Westmoreland fells. It was this odd preoccupation with "things that come out of the earth" that earned him the nickname of 'Panhandle'.

A formal education at a local grammar school did not succeed in blurring the edges of his geological dream. When faced, however, with the problems of earning a living, it soon became apparent to him that the labour market had few demands for prospectors, so he did the next best thing and went to work in the pit. After serving a period of training at a National Coal Board center he began his mining career as an apprentice at the North Wall-Bottle pit, and embarked on a course of study which was eventually to make him a fully qualified mining surveyor.

During this period he became interested in jazz and was soon playing guitar and piano in a small 'jazz combo' which toured miners' clubs in the Tyneside area. As a result of this excursion into the world of art his nickname lost its prefix and he became Johnny Handle (a pun on the name of the composer of oratorios).

His experiences in the pit made a profound impression on him and his original passion for geology was extended to include both the pits and the colliers who worked in them. It was not, however, until a copy of 'Come All Ye Bold Miners', A.L. Lloyd's collection of mining songs, came into his hands that he determined to become the bard of the Northumberland coalfield. With songs like "Farewell to the Monty" and "The Gaffer's Bait" he has made a brilliant start.

Handle is a pit-bard in the great tradition of Tommy Armstrong and George Ridley; like them he is fascinated by the coal-mining community and, again like them, uses the vocabulary of the colliers themselves. To acquire the dialect and vocabulary of the Northumbrian colliers is something which has called for a conscious effort on Handle's part, it was something that he could never have got at grammar school. Having mastered it he has made it the language of his creative life.

With the emergence of regionalist songwriters like Johnny Handle, the British folksong revival can be said to have entered a new and important phase.

STAN KELLY

Born 1919 in the city of Liverpool. Father "the best plumber on Merseyside". Attended a local council school until evacuated to Cheshire in 1940... "which we stuck for only six weeks". The family returned to Liverpool in time to be bombed out of their home in one of the first Luftwaffe raids on Merseyside.

In 1942, Kelly won a scholarship to a grammar school and after studying there for five years won a further scholarship, this time to Cambridge University. His entry into the halls of higher learning was, however, delayed for two years by the military authorities who staked a priority claim on his services. His induction into H.M. Army was not without compensations and when the young warrior received his first week's wage of eleven shillings, he celebrated by getting married.

In the course of time he left the army and proceeded to Cambridge where, for the next five years, he studied mathematics and did research in electronic computers. Leaving Cambridge with a degree, a wife and four children, he began earning a living by consulting, planning and selling data processing systems.

Although he had always been fairly interested in folksongs, it was not until the period of his Cambridge sojourn that he became seriously involved. During that time he helped to found the St. Lawrence Folksong Society, organized a university skiffle group and began writing songs.



The main musical influences which inform his song-writing activities are (a) Anglo-Irish rebel songs and Come-all-ye's; (b) those 19th-century sailors' songs which have, of late, come to be inaccurately called 'Liverpool material'. When the Come-all-ye influence is uppermost, Kelly is led inevitably into the cul-de-sac of parody, that area where anger becomes flabby and satire is turned into burlesque. With the 'forebitter'-inspired songs, on the other hand, one is conscious of the fact that the author is making a real attempt to communicate his thoughts and feelings about 'his city'. The attempt is not always successful, often because the author, in trying to recapture his pre-Cambridge vision of Merseyside, allows his imagination to overshoot the mark with the consequence that he evokes a Merseyside which ceased to exist after 1920. When the attempt is successful, however, and the aim just right, the effect is very good indeed.

CHARLES PARKER

Born 1919 in Bournemouth, a resort town on England's south coast. Father a railway-traffic clerk who later sold kerosene from a handcart on the Bournemouth streets. After a period spent at a secondary school, Parker entered a government laboratory as a would-be metallurgical research worker, but two years' application to this work finally convinced him of his unshakeably unscientific bent. During the war he served in the Royal Navy as a submarine commander and won the Distinguished Service Cross. After the war he entered Queens College, Cambridge, on a government ex-service grant and there studied history. In 1948, he joined the BBC as a feature-



writer/producer, first in the European Service, then in the North American section of the Overseas Service. In 1954, he became senior feature producer of the Midland Region of the BBC. In 1958, he began, with Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, to develop the actuality-radio-ballad and the success of works like "The Ballad of John Axon", "Song of a Road", "Singing the Fishing", and "The Big Hewer" have been largely responsible for shifting the emphasis from the interpretative to the creative aspects of the folkmusic revival in Britain.

Parker, who is a profoundly religious man, is deeply concerned with the rootlessness of modern urban life and is constantly preoccupied with the search for weapons with which to combat this. He believes that in the common search for weapons with which to combat this. He believes that in the common people there is to be found a great reserve of creative power the most vigorous expression of which is to be found in folk music and folk utterance. "No Room at the Inn" was written for a Nativity play which he composed and produced in his parish church in 1960.

NOTES ON SONGS

SIDE I, Band 1: O'ROURKE

In the early days of Time-and Motion-Study, a number of employers went to the length of having timing gadgets fitted to the doors of factory toilets. This attempt to play Canute to natural functions was not popular with the workers and their response to it was often unorthodox.

SIDE I, Band 2: UNDER ALOW THE GROUND

During the period when coal production was a decisive factor in Britain's war-effort, young men were given the choice of entering the coal-mining industry or the fighting service. The hero of this fine song chose the mines and lived to regret it.

SIDE I, Band 3: THE CAN O' TEA

It has long been the practice for Britain's workers to interrupt their labours with a ten-minute morning-and-afternoon tea-break. Among the white-collar workers 'the break' is written into the charter of employment but for most manual workers it is something to be surreptitiously enjoyed. Employers generally turn a blind eye to the practice but, on occasion, use it as an excuse to fire a troublesome worker. In the winter of 1961, workers in a number of industries struck to legitimize the tea break.

SIDE I, Band 4: MUMBO

The hero of this song was a student friend of the author's Oxford days who was denied entrance to an English 'pub'.

SIDE I, Band 5: RUM'LL HAE TO DO TODAY

McGinn, like most Scotsmen, is 'fond of a glass' and this excellent drinking song bears testimony to his fondness.

SIDE I, Band 6: TAM THE TOFF

The Glasgow working-class have a heart dislike of those who pose as their 'betters'. With them the word 'toff' has a somewhat contemptuous ring. McGinn wrote this piece for his children.

SIDE I, Band 7: I'LL GI'E YOU YOUR WHISKEY BACK AGAIN

The Scots sabbath with its closed hostelrys is, perhaps the most depressing feature of the Caledonian scene; for the 'hung-over' it is a form of torture. The hero of this song is a composite picture of all those poor souls who have wandered through interminable sabbaths with their tongues hanging out.

SIDE I, Band 8: THE HAUNTED SINGLE-END

In the summer of 1961 Scottish newspapers carried the story of a Glasgow family who were so bothered by the attentions of a ghost that they were forced to vacate their apartment.

SIDE I, Band 9: MY FATHER WAS BORN A HEBREW

Fascists in West-Germany celebrated the Christmas season of 1960 by defacing the walls of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries. It was these activities which prompted McGinn to write this song.

SIDE I, Band 10: THIS IS OUR LAND

The presence of American atomic-submarines in Scotland's Holy-Loch has been the object of much popular resentment. More than a score of songs, most of them fiercely nationalistic, have been born out of this situation. The piece given here is based upon a mawkishly patriotic parlour-ballad.

SIDE I, Band 11: THEY'LL NEITHER WORK NOR WANT

The catch-phrase which forms the burden of this witty song is one which, in Scotland, is usually applied to work-shy members of the lumpenproletariat. McGinn neatly turns the tables by making it fit the representatives of the so called 'upper-class'. The reference to the English Royal Family in verse 3 is calculated to endear the song to all Scots' republicans.

SIDE I, Band 12: MY UNCLE DAN

McGinn's uncle Dan disgraced the family by becoming a foreman but Matt's song has done much towards removing this blot on the family escutcheon.

SIDE II, Band 1: STAN KELLY (Liverpool Town)

This somewhat raffish exercise in the style of a 'forebitter' is one of the author's most successful songs.

SIDE II, Band 2: THE OLD MARK II

The enlisted man undergoing his period of national-service is subject to many trials and tribulations, not least of which is his reluctant possession of a rifle which appears to have been issued to him with the express purpose of making his life intolerable. Stan Kelly's valedictory salute to the soldier's instrument of torture is one that will find an immediate echo in the hearts of all who have ever exchanged their names for numbers.

SIDE II, Band 3: JOHNNY HANDLE AND LOU KILLEN

When the British coal mines were nationalized in 1945, the nationalization authority inherited many pits that were worked out. In the stream-lining process which has gone on during the last few years it has sometimes been found necessary to abandon uneconomical pits. The Montague, or 'Monty', is one such pit. Handle's text combined with Lou Killen's beautiful tune, makes an extremely moving lament.

SIDE II, Band 4: THE GAFFER'S BAIT

The food which a collier takes down the pit is regarded as sacred; it is not only his most important link with the outside world and home but, in times of pit disaster, may be his link with life itself.

SIDE II, Band 5: THE STONEMAN'S LAMENT

This admirable description of a stoneman's working day is worthy of inclusion in any collection of coal-mining songs.

SIDE II, Band 6: THE COLLIER LAD IS A CANNY LAD

The majority of Handle's songs are modelled upon the work of Tyneside Music-Hall writers such as Thomas Armstrong and George Ridley; The Collier Lad, however, is much closer, in idiom, to traditional Tyneside songs.

SIDE II, Band 7: THE COLLEGE VALLEY HUNT

In the North of England, particularly in the English border counties of Cumberland, Westmoreland and Northumberland, fox-hunting is a sport of hard-working farmers, quarrymen, gypsum miners and the like. It is fox-hunters such as these, rather than the county gentry of the southern and midland counties, who have produced the best of Britain's hunting songs. Alan Rogerson's spirited piece is in the great tradition that produced 'John Peel'.

SIDE II, Band 8: CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

Kent is one of the few song-writers working in Britain today who can write a parody without it sounding like an undergraduate joke. To take a sugar-coated 'pop' of yesteryear and give it guts and a spine is no mean task but it is well within the range of Kent's sardonic talent.

SIDE II, Band 9: THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE KNOB

During the season of goodwill, Christmas 1961, British TV audiences were given a glimpse of American nuclear preparedness via a short documentary dealing with the lads and lasses 'who keep a watchful eye on the free peoples of the world'. That short film provided the inspiration for this song.

SIDE II, Band 10: OUR COMMONWEALTH BROTHERS

The British Tory Government's decision to restrict immigration from Commonwealth countries has shocked millions of people throughout the world. Kent's song was written on the eve of the government debate on the new act.

SIDE II, Band 11: NO ROOM AT THE INN

Most of Parker's songs are written as narration for radio programmes or as part of church performances. This one featured in a nativity play which he wrote for the Harborn parish church in 1960.

O ROURKE

Now, maybe I'm right and maybe I'm wrong,
Maybe I shouldna go singing this song,
For the jury decided and you may as well,
That a fella like me should be roasting in Hell.
Heuch ay, heuch till I fa',
Heuch ay, heuch till I dee.

Now I had a gaffer his name was O'Rourke,
He had a terrible passion for work,
In miles and in tons he took all he could see,
Though he never was greedy, he gied it to me.

One day in the work I went round for a smoke,
The door burst open and there stood O'Rourke,
He started to swear and he gied me his curse,
He insulted my mother and that was far worse.

He jumped for my throat and he gied me a fright,
I was quick on my feet and I stpped to the right,
There was nothing could stop him, this terrible man,
Till he landed feet up wi' his heid in the pan.

I was tremblin' wi' fear as his heid gave a thud,
And I looked doon and saw that his claes were a' mud,
I knew it was certain to upset his wife,
For they'd never been dirty afore in his life.

He would ha'e to be cleaned afore he went hame,
Or I knew that he never could face his wee dame,
Yet it wasna his claes was the worst o' his plight,
For his heid was still stuck there, a terrible sight.

I looked and I thocht as I buckled my belt,
And you never could feel the compassion I felt,
I'll wash all his claes were the words that I said,
Ach, and while I'm about it, I'll wash the man's heid.

In Berlinnie I wait for the man to come roond,
That'll open the door and let me drop doon,
And I'll pray for O'Rourke as they give me the tug,
For they hang me the morra for pulling the plug.

GLOSSARY

gaffer.....foreman
claes.....clothes
thocht.....thought
morra.....tomorrow

UNDER ALOW THE GROUND

CHORUS:

Under alow the ground, O, under alow the ground.
Deid or alive I lie below, under alow the ground.

There's eighteen years have come and gone
Since first I wore the lamp;
But every time I think o' them,
It's enough to give me the cramp.

'Twas in the year o' forty-three
When Bevin was your man,
I tried to dodge the sodgers
And I fell for Ernie's plan.

The battles they had raging then,
Had me as scared as Hell,
But if I'd ha' known where I was goin',
I'd ha' chased auld Rommel mysel'.

I'd scarcely touched the bottom
Before my heid was sair;
Bangin' against a three-feet roof
And crawlin' about like a bear.

A dozen times I volunteered,
I gathered the taste for war,
But the Gordons and the H.L.I.,
Sid: "Just you stay where you are!"

This Bevin-Boy's a man now,
He's growin' auld and grey,
But come to the fit o' the Milky pit,
And you'll find him there the day.

Ye'll a' be doon afore you're done,
 Alang wi' me and the mole,
 But ye'll be comin' to rest your bones,
 Ye'll no' be howkin' coal.

So whenever ye gi'e your fire a poke,
 Or musk a cup o' tea,
 Just think on Ernie Bevin
 And have a wee thocht for me.

GLOSSARY

Alow.....below.
 Bevin.....Minister of Labour in the
 British war time government.
 H.L.I.....Highland Light Infantry.
 Mask.....brew.
 Thocht.....thought.
 Howkin.....digging.
 Sodgers.....soldiers.
 Heid.....head.
 Sair.....sore.

THE CAN O' TEA

CHORUS:

Now the champagne flows, the wineglass glows,
 The shipyard gates'll have to close,
 They say it's a' because o' me,
 And I canna ha'e my can o' tea.
 Dowrie ah the day, my can o' tea.

For forty years and fourteen mair,
 The men that work wi' Donald Blair,
 They've ay had a middle o' the mornin' plan,
 They stop at ten to bile their can.

But Donald he was awful wise,
 Although he always closed his eyes,
 He never ever gied us leave,
 So he had a trump-caird up his sleeve.

This mornin', Donald came to me,
 He pointed to my can o' tea,
 Then he let oot an awfu' roar,
 He said "Young man, get oot that door."

But the men said I'd been victimized,
 For the union I had organised;
 So when I laid doon my can o' tea,
 A thousand men marched oot wi' me.

MUMBO

Mumbo was a duskie man, the sun had burned him
 brown,
 But when he met with a colour-bar, it never got
 him down,
 He'd ask them: What colour is the good Lord's
 skin?
 Tell me, brother, do.
 Is he black or is he brown, or is he just like
 you?

He went into a bar one night but he heard the
 barman say:
 "We dont want no darkies here", so Mumbo then
 said: "Pray,
 Tell me, What colour is the good Lord's skin..
 etc.

He went to pray in Pretoria but the preacher's face
 turned blue,
 He thumped on his bible and he told Mumbo: "You're
 sitting in the white man's pew.
 What colour is the good Lord's skin.."etc.

Mumbo stood at the pearly gates, said Peter:
 "Please come in,
 "I will", said Mumbo, "But I want to know what
 colour is the good Lord's skin.
 What colour is the good Lord's skin? I'll tell
 you, brother, true.
 He is black and he is brown and he is just like you."

HUM'LL HAE TO DO TODAY

I daun'ered doon tae Rutherglen toon
 And there I met wi' Susan;
 She kissed me and she left me,
 And 'twas that that set me boozin'.
 Rum'll hae to dae the day and rid
 me o' my sorrow,
 Rum'll hae to dae the day and gin'll
 dae the morrow.

Oh, noo I've met another lass, her face is nice
 and bonny,
 But I'm awfu feared she wanders off and leaves
 me on my owny.

Noo I've just won a thousand pounds, I'm awfu
 feared I lose it,
 So just to rid me o' the fear, I think I'd
 better booze it.

The Rutherglen pubs are a' shut doon, to celebrate
 the Sabbath,
 But I'll gang out to East Kilbride, I aye make that
 my habit.

They say that cider makes you thin and flighty as
 a feather,
 And whiskey makes ye awfu' fat, so I'll hae baith
 thegither.

GLOSSARY

Daun'ered.....strolled, wandered.
 Dae.....do.
 Aye.....always.
 Baith.....both.

TAM THE TOFF

CHORUS:

Tam the toff took it off, the toffee he took off,
 'Twas Tam the toff he took the treacle-toffee
 aff o' me.

I've never liked the toffs at a' since I was awfu
 wee,
 'Twas Tam the toff that put me off wi' what he
 did wi' me.

A tally wi' his ice-cream van came runnin' doon
 our street,
 I grat until my mammy gied me threepence for a
 treat.

I went and told my faither what Tam the toff had
 done,
 But I think he would have shot me if he'd only
 had a gun.

The polis, when I told them, began to roar and
 yell,
 "It's no' the thing a toff would dae", and he
 stuck me in the cell.

GLOSSARY

Toff.....a gentleman, a rich person, a
 member of the upper class.
 Tally.....a street vendor.
 Grat.....cried, wept.
 Gied.....gave.
 Polis.....police.
 Dae.....do.

I'LL GIE YOU YOUR WHISKEY BACK AGAIN

CHORUS:

Gie's a drap oot o' your bottle, to clear up my
 throttle,
 I hae a bottle o' my ain,
 For you can see me on Friday, for Friday is my
 payday,
 And I'll gie you your whiskey back again.

Wee Willie MacIntyre thought his tongue had gone
on fire,
He was walkin' roond the barrows feeling dry;
When he came across a man wi' a bottle in his
hand.
Willie grabbed it and the fellow heard him cry:
Gie's a drap oot your bottle to clear up my
throttle,
I hae a bottle o' my ain.
For you can see me on Friday....etc.

Now the fellow says to Willie: "You're surely
awful silly,
Come Friday you could easily have the sack."
"Ah" says Willie, "Dont be moody, you could see
me on my broo day,
So you'll be sure to get your whiskey back.

Note:

Broo day is the day on which an unemployed man
draws his relief at the Labour Bureau or 'broo'.

THE HAUNTED SINGLE-END

Noo a deid man seldom walks and he very rarely talks,
It's no' very often ye'll find him runnin' aroon',
But I'm a refugee from a graveyard in Dundee,
And I've come to haunt some hooses in Glesca to...
oo....con,
I've come to haunt some hooses in Glesca toon.

Now the reason I arose was to get mysel' some clothes,
For it really gets hell of a cauld below the grun',
But I whispered to mysel', ah I think I might as well,
Hing aroond for a while and hae some fun.

A man put oot his light, on a cauld and wintry night,
I showed him one of my eyes and slapped his heid,
He said "Oh!" and I said "Boo!", he said, "Who the
Hell are you."
I said "Dont be feared, I'm only a man that's deid."

Now the fellow knelt and prayed and this is what he
said:
"Why in the name of God have you picked on me?"
So I pukled away his ruck and I skelpt him on the
lug,
"The reason" I says, "Is just to let you see."

When he brought the polis in, I battered him on
the chin,
The polis turned aroond and he blamed my friend;
He marched him to the goal and he'll be in there
quite a while,
But I'll see naebody takes his single-end.

Noo the polis thought him daft, and a lot o' people
laughed,
When the fella said a ghost was in his hoose;
But what the fella said was true and I might be
visiting you,
So just remember I'm still on the loose.

GLOSSARY

Deid.....dead.
Single-end.....a single-roomed apartment
or house.
Heid.....head.
Skelpt.....smacked.
Let you see.....let you see who's boss.
Polis.....police.

MY FATHER WAS BORN A HEBREW

CHORUS:

My faither was born a Hebrew, my faither was born
a Jew,
My faither was born a Hebrew and I am a Hebrew too.

It is five thousand years since my faither's folk
a' fled,
In search of milk and honey and by Moses they were
led.

Now Jesus was a preacher, he was heard by quite a
few,
But when he was going aroond the place they said
he was just a Jew.

A laddie needs his lassie, a lassie needs her lad,
But they didna understand till they sent for
Sigmund Freud.

The workers worked in dungeons they didna have a
pal,
But then along comes Charlie and he writes Das
Kapital.

The atom was a tiny thing, the scientists a' knew,
Along come Abie Einstein and splits the thing in two.

There's good and bad in Scotia, there's good in
Timbuctoo,
There's good and bad in every lad, so dinna run doon
the Jew.

THIS IS OUR LAND

There was a soldier, a Scottish soldier,
He'd wandered far away. When he came back one day,
He found his homeland was a big A-bomb-land,
It had been ta'en ower by the Yanks.
And they said: "Look, Jock, this is oor land noo,
It's no' a moorland noo, it's no' a dour land noo,
This land is oors and it isna your land noo,
It belongs to John F. K.

"We've ta'en your water, your Holy water,
But so's that you'll no' care, we've put Polaris
there.

It's just a lendy, so 's we'll defend thee
In case Gagarin should come ower."
But Jock said: "Look, Jack, I have just come back
from a watch that's black,
And you had better pack.
In plainer words, Jack, I'm giving you the sack.
We dont want your nonsense here.

These towering highlands are no' G.I.lands,
My faither gied them me and I'll hae them till I dee.
These lovely highlands and lochs and islands,
Ye'll find they're my lands, they're no' yours.
So a' your bombs, Jack, you can take them back,
Take your subs away, up the Hudson Bay,
For there's enough fear in the U.S.A.
We dont want your nonsense here."

GLOSSARY

Oor.....our
Noo.....now
Lochs.....lakes

THEY'LL NEITHER WORK NOR WANT

CHORUS:

They'll neither wark nor want, they'll neither wark
nor want,
They'll nae go to the berries and they'll neither
wark nor want.

How some folk have it easy and some folk have it
hard,
Some are fond o' caviar and some eat bread-and-
lard;
Some'll howk your coal oot and keep your bunker
filled,
Some have never worked at a', and they never,
never will.

Oh, there's our cousin Hughie, 's been idle a' his
days,
He's got shares a' ower the place and he'll nae
gae short o' claes.
He's got a hand in motors, boats and tea-pot lids,
Spends his time by the telephone, making take-
ower bids.

Oor Phil's a big-game hunter, he disna know no fear,
He went wi' Liz to India and he shot a Tiger there;

The first six shots misfired and Phil was red wi'
rage,
So they took him to the Bombay zoo and he shot one
in a cage.

I know a big aristocrat, his faither was a highway-
man,
He's no' got nae time at a' for the British railway-
men,
He says he wouldna pay him, he's just a lazy louse,
It's him he blames for spoilin' his aims when he's
out there shooting grouse.

UNCLE DAN

CHORUS:

Ricky do dum day, do dum day,
Ricky, ricky do dum day.

My uncle Dan's a decent man, he never was a wede,
But they made him a gaffer and it went to the poor
man's heid.

On the day he was promoted, the men a' drank wi'
glee,
He fined them a' a half-a-croon when he found them
drinkin' tea.

Aroond and roond the boats he went, you'd hear him
sniff and smell,
To catch the men a' dain' the things that Dan had
done himsel'.

He ventured up a funnel wi' a hame-made ladder
rope,
So he could keep an eye on things wi' a great big
telescope.

The boiler-men got busy and they began to stoke,
And poor old Dan went overboard in a great big
cloud o' smoke.

A fortnight came and went it's way and Dan was
thocht for deid,
But they picked him up at the tail of the bank
with a herring wrapped round his heid.

My poor old Auntie Jessie she took it awfu' sore,
She was weeping like a well (when Dan got back) -
on the shouther o' the man next door.

GLOSSARY

Wede.....a useless person.
Dain'.....doing.
Heid.....head.
Deid.....dead.
Shouther.....shoulder.

LIVERPOOL TOWN

It's ten long years since I sailed away,
To sail the wide seas o'er;
Me very first trip on an old steam-ship
That was bound for Baltimore.
I was ten days sick and I couldn't stick
That bobbing up and down,
And I told them, Jack, just turn right back
For dear old Liverpool town.

I wish I was back in Liverpool, Liverpool town where
I was born;
There isn't no trees, no scented breeze, no fields
of waving corn,
But there's lots of girls with peroxide curls and
the black-and-tan flows free,
With six in a bed by the old pier-head and it's
Liverpool town for me.

I built the Mersey Tunnel, lads, way back in thirty-
three,
We dug a hole in the ground until we found a hole
called Wallasey;
The foreman cried: "Come on outside, the roof is
falling down,"
I'm telling you, Jack, we all swam back to dear Old
Liverpool town.

There's every race and colour of face and every
sort of name,
But the pidgeons on the pierhead, they treat you
all the same;
And if you walk up Upper Parliament Street there's
people black and brown,
And I've also seen them orange and green in dear
Old Liverpool Town.

GLOSSARY

Black-and-tan.....a mixture of stout and ale.

THE OLD MARK II

O, there's sorrow in my heart oh, my old mark two,
Since we lately had to part, oh, my old mark two;
I was sad and feeling sore when I returned you to
the store,
I'm not a soldier any more, oh my old Mark two.

I'll miss the drilling on the square, oh, my old
Mark two,
For you were always there, oh, my old Mark two.
Only once you let me down, when I felled you to
the ground,
Christ! you made an awful sound, oh, my old Mark
two.

One more thing I'd like to tell, oh, my old Mark
two,
Well, I hope you rust to Hell, oh, my old Mark
two;
For the future I have planned with the plough
in my hands,
We'll have peace throughout the land, oh, my old
Mark two.

GLOSSARY

Mark II.....a rifle.

FAREWELL TO THE MONTY

For many lang years the pit's done its best,
And sets have rolled oot o' flats north, east and
west,
And all of the rumours that closing was due,
Have all been put doon for alas it is true.

A meeting was held to discuss the affair,
And the manager said to us right then and there,
"Let's have one last go before this pit is done,
To show a good profit on each single ton."

No profits were made but, through stocks piling high,
The Coal Board decided this pit has to die,
And as output comes doon, we get drafted away,
To pits to the east for the rest of our days.

I've filled in the Fan pit, I've cut in the seam,
In the Newbigging Beaumont since I was fifteen,
I've worked in the sections and in the Main-Coal,
Man, it's hot doon the Monty, she's a dusty old hole.

Farewell to you, Monty, I know your roads well,
Your work has been good and your work has been Hell,
Nae mair to your dirty old heap will I come,
For your coal is all finished and your life it is
done.

THE GAFFER'S BAIT

Listen to my story and a tale I'll relate,
About the adventures of my gaffer's bait;
He'd forgotten his bait-bag and he gave it to me,
There was two home-made teacakes and a big flask o'
tea.

Noo down in the pit, ye meet all kinds o' men,
There's toonies and queer folk and ones from the
pen;
They might steal your watch and your lows might be
late,
But there's nothing more sacred than a miner's own
bait.

Now knowing how precious was this cup o' tea,
I stowed it away just as safe as could be;
They were having a blow down at Fourteenth West,
I sat on my bait bag, you'll guess all the rest.

Aye, I put my hand doon, this flask it was broke,
And me gaffer turned red and I thought he would
choke;
And when he turned roond, we went on wor way,
An ther thing happened to ruin my day.

Noo the gaffer, that's Dickson, he stamped on
ahead,
When I looks at the way and I saw something red;
So I stopped to rub my eyes and I turned all
aroond,
For there lay the gaffer's tea-cakes and jam
on the ground.

There was my footprints on them and those of my mate,
They was nae love that day for my gaffer's bait;
And, as tremblin' I told him, to myself I did pray,
Then he made us to suffer, he had my bait that day.

So take warning from me if you're given this task,
Just watch what you're diggin', that's all that I
ask;
You can rob, you can steal, you can ride in ower
late,
But when you're working for the gaffer, take care
of his bait.

GLOSSARY

Gaffer.....boss, foreman, etc.
Bait.....food taken down and eaten in
the pit.
Toonies.....townies, city folk.
Lows.....the end of a shift.
Wor.....our.

THE STONEMAN'S LAMENT

Noo the coal is off and the fellas have left the flat,
And the Deputy comes and asks wer what wor at;
So we tell him and he stems the holes we've drilled
And the shots gan off and the packs we build,
In the Brockwell seam in the north of Number Five
West.

Noo we build packs roond the stones that's in the
gate,
And we get them neat and tidy weel afore bait,
For there's a girders to hump and girders to set,
And side to take off and that aa dor bet,
Doon the Brockwell seam in the north of Number
Five West.

So the belt is rolled and set down in the new
tracks,
And they draw out the chocks while lying on their
backs,
And they set them again in their new place for to
stop the weighting on the face,
In the Brockwell seam in the north of Number Five
West.

For me marrer's reckoned-up he's won the Snowbell
draw,
Wi' a hoosy card, and a pipe in my hand,
We'll forget all aboot that no-man's land
In the Brockwell Seam in the north of Number Five
West.

GLOSSARY

Stoneman.....man engaged in driving
roads through rock down
the pit.
Stems.....packs with dynamite.
Deputy.....an overseer down the pit.
Gan.....go.
Noo.....now.
Weel.....well.
Bait.....food, the time set aside for
eating sandwiches.

Hump.....to carry.
That aa dor bet.....that I do bet.
Marra.....mate.
Draw.....a sweepstake or lottery.
Hoosy card.....a bingo card.

THE COLLIER LAD IS A CANNY LAD

CHORUS:
O, the collier lad is a canny lad and he's always
of good cheer,
He knows how to work and he knows how to shirk,
And he knows how to sup good beer.

Why, it's doon the shaft on a Monday morn and the
cavill is the best,
In the Busty seam with Thompson's team and a flat
called the Fourteenth West;
Noo the face is a hundred-and-five yards long when
measured from neuk to neuk,
And we're crawling all ower the scufflings, lads
keep doon or you're bound to get stuck.

Well, the shots gan off and the shovels do fly till
the belts get loaded full,
And in half-an-hour a stone gans on and the motor
will not pull,
"Broken belt!" is the cry and we all creep oot from
the mother-gate into 'men',
Geordie Harley's the Deputy in wor flat and he'll
drive us roond the bend.

So we pull we strain for to fix it again and when
it's been put straight,
Tim Jones, that's the Secretary of wor lodge, says
it's time that we had wor bait;
So we take worsel' to a quiet spot with a plank and
a chock for a seat,
And the crack at last flies thick and fast as the
doings at the club last neet.

Why, it's very hard when you're paid by the yard for
to take long ower your bait,
So we crawl back on, get some timbering done, for
the belts we can hardly wait,
For it's twenty-six inches high my lads, and the work
is really grand,
And the fellas pay, four quid a day, it's the best in
all the land.

GLOSSARY

Cavill.....a working place at the face chosen by
drawing lots.
Neuk.....corner.
Gan.....go.
Wor.....our.
Bait.....food carried down the pit and eaten
during a break.
Crack.....conversation.

THE COLLEGE-VALLEY HOUNDS

On the eleventh of October nineteen-hundred-and-
forty-three,
I'll give you all particulars if you'll listen
unto me;
The hounds frae College-Valley, there appointments
to fulfill.
They cast away o'er the Yeveron Bell, bold Reynard's
blood to spill.
Tally ho, hark away; Tally ho, hark away,
Success to the College Valley hounds,
O, hark, hark away.

At ten o'clock that morning they reached the Yeveron
Bell,
And they searched the ground all over but they
couldn't find the smell,
Till the celebrated Rosabelle she found their
favourite hole,
And she turned her head unto the pack and loudly
she did bawl.

These hounds were called together with a speed I do
declare,

And by the head, bold Sheena, drew Reynard from his lair,
Well, he headed north with all his might but he got a big surprise,
For to meet the maiden in the fields so early dazzled Reynard's eyes.

How gallantly these hounds ran off, they ran in by the mill,
And with loud cries of energies, bold Reynard's blood to spill,
Now the hunters being far behind, they thought their day was done,
But they met the hounds returning with two foxes instead of one.

Now these animals they did their best their precious lives to save,
And knowing that their race was run they prepared for the grave,
Death was their fate, they both did run, dispute it if you can,
For they killed one at the Cutty-Stahe and the other at the Hewlett-Crag.

So let's drink a glass to the College lads and pass the bottle round,
O'er lofty hills and mosses their melodic voices sound,
These men are famed throughout the land for the hunting of these hounds,
From Glandale to the Carter-Bar no better can be found.

CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

Christmas comes but once a year, so the holy bible says,
And man must stash his cash all year because of Christmas Day;
All the stores were gaily garnished, tinsel and imitation snow,
And we look forward to Christmas Day and we hope we have the dough.

Some people say it's all because of a boy called Jesus Christ,
And not for making excess cash, those people are not very nice;
Ring the cash up, sing the praises, the saviour born to men,
He saved us all from bankruptcy, may he soon come round again.

Now Nina and Frederick and Gracie Fields are getting in the act,
For a Christmas song sells like a bomb and that's a bloody fact;
Mary's boychild, little donkey, Santa, kisses, Mum,
As long as you play on the theme, you'll make a goodly sum.

So a Merry Christmas, everyone, although the greeting's stale,
If you didn't get the gift you wanted, then you'll get it in our January sale;
Halleluya, line the pavements, cram the cash-desk with your pay,
Thank God for Christianity and roll on Christmas Day!

THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE KNOB

CHORUS:

I'm the man, the man, the well-paid man in charge of the dreadful knob,
The most pleasing thing about it, it's almost a permanent job,
When the atom-war is over and the earth at (last is free,)
A consolation I've got, or maybe it's not, there'll be nobody here but me.

I sit at my desk in Washington, in front of a large machine,
More vicious than Adolph Hitler, more deadly than strychnine;
In the evening, after a tiring day, just to give myself a laugh,

I hit the button a playful belt and I listen for the blast.

Well, if Khrushchev starts his nonsense and kicks up a nasty smell,
With a wink and nod from Kennedy, I'll blast him clean to Hell;
And as for that fellow Castro, him with the sugar-cane,
He needn't hide behind his whiskers for I'll get him just the same.

If my wife denies me conjocular rights or the morning milk is sour,
From eight till nine in the morning you're in for a nervous hour;
The button being so terribly close, it's really a dreadful joke,
I give it a bump with my arse as I go past and you'll all go up in smoke.

Well, I'm thinking of joining the army, the army to ban the bomb,
We'll take up a large collection and I'll donate my thumb;
For without it I am powerless and that's the way to be,
You don't have to kill the whole bloody lot to make the people free.

OUR COMMONWEALTH BROTHERS

CHORUS:

O, we're pals wi' the Yanks and we're pals wi' the Gerrys,
We're pals wi' a' Europe, we joined them in trade,
But fare ye weel, ye commonwealth brithers,
We're bidding guidbye to the Pats and the Spades.

So it's fare ye weel to Paddy the builder,
And fare ye weel to Paddy the gay;
You've sung us your songs and wrote some of our poetry,
But wearing the green isna welcome the day.

O, the boys from Jamaica nd from the West Indies,
They joined us in battle and fought for oor rights;
We've housed them in slums, exploited their earnings,
Nae mair o' their kind, for their kind isna white.

O, Rabbie the Butler has closed the door on them,
Locked it up fast and thrown awa' the key;
Nae hope for them, nae glory for Rabbie,
Is this auld Britannia, the mother o' the free?

NO ROOM AT THE INN

CHORUS:

No room, no room for Jesus.
No! No room nowhere.
We had no room for Jesus,
So we laid him in a stable, cold and bare.

O, where were you my brother,
When we laid that baby there?
I was watching television,
And I didn't have the time to spare.

And where were you, my sister,
When we laid that baby there?
We had some company coming,
And I didn't have a thing fit to wear.

And where were you Mister Businessman,
When we laid that baby there?
I can never get away from the office,
At this busiest time of the year.

And you, Mister Politician,
When we laid that baby there?
How can I have time for a baby,
With the next election to prepare?

Come in, come in, King Herod,
You'll find good company here.
We'd still leave that baby helpless,
For you to rend and tear.