

Margaret Barry + Michael Gorman

Sing and play, acc. banjo and fiddle

Recorded by Barbara Dane

Folkways Records FW 8729



M
1744
B279
M327
1975

MUSIC LP

Folkways Records FW 8729

SIDE A: (28:13)

- 1) HER MANTLE SO GREEN (6:02) M. Barry, vocal
- 2) THE AVONMORE/THE BOYS AT THE LOCH (5:11)
M. Gorman, fiddle
- 3) THE ROSE OF MOONCOIN (3:55) M. Barry, vocal
- 4) THE BOYS OF THE TOWN/THE KILLASHANDRA
LASSES (3:55) M. Gorman, fiddle
- 5) THE TURFMAN FROM ARDEE (3:50) M. Barry, vocal
- 6) IT'S BETTER TO BE SINGLE THAN A POOR MAN'S
WIFE (1:15) M. Barry, vocal
- 7) THE FERMOY LASSES/THE PIGEON ON THE GATE
(4:05) M. Gorman, fiddle

SIDE B: (26:45)

- 1) THE LIMERICK RAKE (3:55) M. Barry, vocal
- 2) THE KID ON THE MOUNTAIN/THE MUG OF BROWN
ALE (6:35) M. Gorman, fiddle
- 3) DOWN BY THE LIFFEYSIDE (3:30) M. Barry, vocal
- 4) DWYER'S HORNPIPE/THE SWEEP'S HORNPIPE (6:15)
M. Gorman, fiddle
- 5) STILL I LOVE HIM (3:35) M. Barry, vocal
- 6) THE STRAY-AWAY CHILD/THE LARK IN THE
MORNING (2:55) M. Gorman, fiddle

CREDITS

Recorded in New York City on October 8, 9, 10 of 1965, by
Barbara Dane.

Biographical notes compiled from many notes and discussions with
Michael Gorman and Margaret Barry, by Barbara Dane.
Michael and Margaret back each other instrumentally on every song,
with Margaret playing all banjo and Michael playing all fiddle.
Song notes from Margaret and Michael's memories.

©1975 FOLKWAYS RECORDS AND SERVICE CORP.
43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., U.S.A.

Margaret Barry Michael Gorman

Sing and play, acc. banjo and fiddle

Recorded by Barbara Dane

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

COVER PHOTO BY DAVID GAHR

Folkways Records FW 8729

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album No. FW 8729

© 1975 by Folkways Records & Service Corp., 43 W. 61st St., NYC, USA

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Margaret Barry & Michael Gorman

A FEW PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF HOW THIS RECORD WAS MADE:

This recording was made in the fall of 1965, when Margaret and Michael were staying with Irwin Silber and me up on Broadway at 71 Street in Manhattan, New York. The visit lasted for a period of several weeks, during which we got used to Margaret's feet padding softly up the hall to the kitchen where she brewed for herself and Michael hundreds of cups of tea "strong enough to trot a mouse in it" the way way they liked it.

Since their room was in a remote corner of the large apartment, I never had to intrude my presence with a broom or cloth but rather left them to their own devices as semi-permanent residents. When at last they went back to Ireland, I'll never forget the treasure of tea-cups presumed lost that were retrieved, nor the job of relieving them of about an inch of calcified sugar at the bottom of each. But the riches of music and stories and even dancing that were our lot during that time were worth every bit of trouble.

No matter what the time of day or night, Michael never failed to produce a few sour balls or life-savers from his vest pocket whenever my daughter, Nina (nine years old at the time) appeared. Margaret's gift to the household was to call up the Guinness public relations lady and tell her that she'd like the usual case of stout delivered, please, knowing all the while she didn't intend to drink any herself. (Other witnesses confirm that she never drinks at all at home, only on the job if at all...but don't let on.) And the two of them could be heard softly making music at the back of the house nearly any time. One had only to say "come on out into the living room" to have the fiddling and singing begin to pass around.

They had come in the summer, but as the visit wore on Margaret needed to buy a winter coat. The trip to Macy's, where she had decided to buy something which would be both useful and a souvenir of "the world's largest department store", was a story in itself as her selections were tried for Michael's approval. Mostly, he kept his

peace, no doubt thinking of the price tags, but his looks told all. As Margaret tried one after the other, maintaining a majestic dignity, she revealed only to a practiced eye the slightest sense of displeasure with her mirrored image in contrast to the setting.

The story is in what didn't happen rather than what did, as at last the handsome and serviceable coat was purchased without any sort of uproar at all. Every living soul has had to face the tension between that mirror in the clothing store and ones' inner image of oneself, and so every reader will recognize what I mean about the unspoken volumes that hung in the air between Margaret Michael and myself. Buying a coat, I guess, had really best be done in private. It was a testimony to the fact that all three of us have had plenty of experience performing our musical arts in those crowded pits of humanity-in-crisis which often witness the flashing fists of sudden adversaries or the heavy slump to the floor of over-indulged melancholia in the form of a working man dressed for Saturday night. In other words, plenty happened but nothing happened. Everything was normal. The store got the money, Margaret got the coat, and nobody was killed. But we all understood a crisis had passed.

While they were visiting, Irwin and I had been conducting a radio series on radio station WBAI in New York called Sing Out! (he was still editor of the magazine). We decided to devote a program to Margaret and Michael, and they came through so beautifully that I realized it was a good opportunity to commit some of their music to tapes. We had been talking about the fact that Michael played a great many of Margaret's grandfather Robert Thompson's airs, and he decided he wanted to tape several. We began to tape a little every day, and the present material was preserved. It hardly seems 10 years, but the time was early October of 1965. Michael wasn't really feeling too fit during those days, having had trouble with his ulcer and his heart, but he wanted to make the recordings...perhaps out of a sense of posterity. I know that one of the reasons Margaret has persistently tried to get this record made and released is because she feels it is a part of Michael's musical legacy to the fiddlers of the future, and to all lovers of this kind of Irish music.

It also embodies some performances of songs which Margaret has not recorded up to now. "Her Mantle so Green" is, of course, on other recordings. But it happens to be for me the most evocative of Margaret's songs. "The Guinness Song" is a perfect phenomenon: the devoted employee/poet canonizing his place of employment, sung by a real

singer of the people who at the same time is willing to identify her image with the product of the company she extolls! Show me any other examples of such a song which have entered into the folklife of the consumer so intimately, and I'll show you a song about something important to people. It's been recorded before, but I can hear it a hundred times. "The Turfman from Ardee" is a brilliant cameo of a place and time lit with graceful, bawdy humor which bears repeating.

The songs which don't appear on any records in my own collection, at least, are: "The Rose of Mooncoin," "It's Better to be Single than a Poor Man's Wife," "Still I Love Him," and "The Limerick Rake." The chance to help those see the light of day made me happy to do the work necessary. Margaret puts more flesh on them than anyone else, for my money. And the way the ultimate male chauvinist emerges in all his delicious hedonism in "The Limerick Rake" almost makes one wish he wouldn't grow up -- but not quite.

I used to like to sing "Still I Love Him" myself, just because it offers insight into one form of adaptation to the demands of the roles society has worked out; to experience the life of the wife of a poor working man, to understand and to forgive in the name of survival. To wit, some of the original words:

When I was single, I had a black shawl.
Now that I'm married I've no clothes at all.
Still I love him, I'll forgive him,
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

Me back it is breakin', my fingers are sore,
A-guttin' the herrin' he brings to the shore.
Still I love him, I'll forgive him...

The storm it is ragin', his boat isn't in.
The others won't tell me what's happened to him.
Still I love him...

But, Margaret's autobiographical words have a different class character from the original. She sings about the eccentric life of a wandering minstrel, frankly and vividly. I've been there too, and can testify that this is real in its own way.

The song which details the life of a poor man's wife could be a clue to Margaret's steadfastly single and independent state, notwithstanding her twin sons and a daughter. The freedom to roam the roads, dancehalls and pubs, and to cross the country and the ocean at will; the courage to endure loneliness, the possibility

of economic disaster, misunderstandings of one's status, jealousy and criticism of many subtle sorts, all these elements and more go into the decision to buck the tide of custom:

I hope you realize as you listen how lucky we are to be able to hear musicians as totally integrated with their music as Margaret and Michael are. In a world of complex cares and concerns, nothing really matters to either of them as much as their music, and their relationship to it is as vital as breathing. But the music for them is never an isolated thing, only their way of being a part of the ages-long stream of human development always aspiring to a more poetic, beautiful, open, connecting relationship. In the short run, day to day, it might feel to them like bread and butter, but over a lifetime it's a calling. Even when you think you're singing or playing mostly to please yourself, when you make your music this close to your fellow human you can't help but know you're only a distillation of the best of all of us. May the Michaels and Margarets always be heard.

- Barbara Dane

MARGARET BARRY:

At the time of this writing, 1975, Margaret is 58 years old and has supported herself through singing for 44 of those years. Born into a family in which music runs from her maternal grandfather (known as the King of the Pipers), to her father who played and taught banjo, her mother who sang, played the harp and banjo, and brothers who played nearly everything with strings from the mandolin and fiddle and banjo onward, she has lived by singing and for singing.

At about 12 years of age, Margaret started going into people's houses to sing after school, "making a nuisance of myself, I suppose." At 14, she bought herself a bicycle for 10 shillings and set off on the roads of Ireland. School had not been able to keep her. She says, "I cried all day because I was prevented from singing in school by the teacher, who said I was too loud over the others. I had to leave old Cork City as I suppose I was a sort of embarrassment there..". On her sturdy Raleigh she crossed and recrossed the country, singing for her supper and what she could collect outside the football matches, markets and fairs, wherever a crowd of people was likely to gather. "A bed at a lodging house cost a shilling, but you had to get your own breakfast."

When she was 17 she finally bought a 4 shilling banjo from a pawn shop, but it wasn't very good. She abandoned it, and later borrowed a wooden one "without any vellum to it at all" from the head superior of the University of Cork until she could buy something better. Gradually she worked her way up to a decent banjo, but they were very hard to find and expensive. She gathered her songs from "the old people" who would write down the words for her out of their memories. Others she found in books, but since she couldn't get the music this way she would invent her own airs. Her singing, like her playing, is self-taught. "Although my father was a teacher, he never bothered with me because he said the music was born in me."

For one who has wandered so many years on her own, Margaret has a keen sense of family. She was born on January 1, 1917, to Tim Cleary and Margaret Thompson. As I can piece out the family tree, her father's maternal grandfather was Robert Thompson, the famous piper. His brothers Willie, Matt and John, were also musicians. Robert Thompson's wife was called Kate Cleary, and had come from Spain to Ireland when she was 17. Margaret remembers that she spoke Spanish, liked to wear mantillas and combs, and that there were a number of other Spanish people around Cork City at the time who made their livings from selling fish and chips at stands, among other things. According to Margaret, Kate's family were horse breeders who had come "originally from Egypt" and lived in caravans or in the fields. In Madrid they had been lace-makers.

Since the Thompson name was so well accepted in musical circles, Margaret's father and mother called themselves Thompson rather than Cleary, and this is the name she grew up with. Tim played the banjo in a dance hall, where he was a partner, taught banjo, and played the accompaniments to the silent movies on the banjo since the town cinema had no piano. The dances were called "four-penny hops" after the admission at the door. Mary played the harp and sang Moore's melodies and others of that vein.

Margaret had a daughter named Nora Barry, who is married and the mother of seven children. Before the babies came along, the mother and daughter teamed up and travelled together as a singing team which called itself "The Barry Sisters", and this is how Margaret comes to be called Barry. Now that the children have come along, Nora's husband frowns on the idea of her leaving home to sing, but in earlier times they used to take a bus with the football players up to the

opening of the Gaelic Football season together, where they sand on the grounds and generally had a good time. Nora lives in Lawrencetown with her family, but manages to sing quite a bit, with a repertoire of many of Margaret's songs but plenty of her own. She also likes the songs of some of the "folk singers" from outside of Ireland.

According to Margaret, "Ireland is all lounges now. There's no more dance halls. You stand on a little platform to sing and everybody's drinkin', and take your turn, and then come the pipers, fiddlers, melodian players and all. You have to pay to go in, and everyone is folk-mad now." Perhaps the modern-day interpreters and popularizers have taken over, but there will still be a solid place for the likes of Margaret. "But I must like the song! I listen to it myself when I'm singin', you know."

Margaret likes to tell the story of the time Phil Raymond, the promoter, signed Michael Gorman and herself to a concert in the Royal Albert Hall, the most prestigious in London. To help insure that they would get proper press attention, he arranged for them to visit the Lord Mayor of Dublin, a Mr. Brady, who gave them a letter and a shillelagh to take to the Mayor of London. When they arrived, they appeared on a TV show with a man called Cliff Mitchelmore, who asked Margaret, on camera, how much Guinness she drinks every night. Playing the game to the hilt, she said 36, but according to Margaret he heard the figure 46. After that, every dance hall proprietor had a case of it ready for her because "they reckoned I couldn't sing without it."

This same Phil Raymond, a man with a well developed flair for headline grabbing, arranged for Margaret to be crowned "Queen of the Tinkers" on television, where "they gave me a tiara of fake diamonds." Margaret says, "I'm not a Tinker, you understand, but I knew quite a lot of travelling tinsmiths. They make hardware, like pans and buckets, for farm people. They are a travelling people, reared on the road like Gypsies, but they are originally Irish. The road is their life, and they can't live in houses. They make good matches between their tribes. If the daughter is a good pan seller she might be matched with a tinsmith, for instance. That's the way it works. Actually, they're just unemployed people who took to the roads to make a living. There is a class distinction between the tinkers, or travelling tinsmiths who can make a tin pot to order, and the people who sell ordinary radios, tape recorders, watches and so forth. But they all have to have a license, pay taxes and insurance just like everybody else. They're

great citizens that way. I'm not a Tinker, that business of being crowned their queen was just for (publicity for) a record, but if that's the way they wanted it that's all right with me."

Together, Margaret and Michael have visited the U.S. several times, performing in the dance halls of the Irish communities in Boston, Brooklyn, Chicago, and elsewhere, as well as at large folk festivals. Now that Michael is gone, Margaret has considered teaming up with another fiddler. "I just haven't found the right one yet, but I have heard some great ones." She says that if her voice holds out, as it gives every sign of doing nicely for many more years to come, she'll keep on thrilling audiences with what A.L. Lloyd calls her "warhoop."

MICHAEL GORMAN

Contrary to the date and place given by A.L. Lloyd (who said it was Dooocastle, County Sligo, Ireland, in 1902) Michael himself described his birthplace as "a British boat on the way from Glasgow to Ireland" and the date as April 11, 1895. When he died at Christmas, 1970, his music partner Margaret Barry says he was 82, which would have made the year of his birth 1888. None of this changes the fact that he was one of the grand masters of the Irish fiddle, with a memory for airs and their titles which can only be called miraculous.

He started playing at the age of nine, and came from a musical family. His mother was a singer from Donegal, and his two aunts were good accordionists. His father, who was in fact a farmer from Sligo (according to Michael), sang, played the flute and accordion, and was a great dancer. His older brother Martin can still dance a respectable hornpipe in his mid 80's. Michael once tried to explain the geneology of the great fiddlers in Sligo in this way:

"There was an old blind fiddler named Thomas Haley who taught James and Thomas Gannon. James taught Michael Coleman and myself, and nearly all the Sligo players were trained by him. He had a first cousin named Thomas Gilmartin, from Powellsborough, who taught all those not taught by James Gannon. His son, Willy Gannon, came to the U.S. and became the champion fiddler of the world. Ewan McColl gave a bad account of me, by the way, when he said I was following a drunkard. But Gannon wasn't a drunkard or a travelling man, he was a carpenter and a builder by profession."

Michael Coleman, the greatest of the Sligo reel and jig players, migrated to America. But Michael Gorman stayed in Ireland where he won medal after medal as well as a great following among the country folk. When he appeared in London, where his music had to take second place for some years to his daytime work, he attracted other Irish immigrant workers to the dances and pubs in droves. His long stay at the Bedford Arms made of the place a center for all the best of Irish musicians.

When Michael and Margaret first teamed up, he was working full time as a parcel post porter in the Liverpool Street railway station. He had been there 11 or 12 years when he put in for a change, to get away from the dust of the mail bags, asking for Waterloo station which was higher up and therefore less dusty. He received the transfer, and was very happy with a new assignment up on the platform, seeing the trains in and out. During that time, he was playing with Margaret at the Bedford Arms and other pubs. The railway had three shifts: early, late, and night, and when he was assigned to early shift he would be able to play at night, get up again at 5 A.M. and be back on the job. When, a short time later, the railway transferred some of the parcel post to Waterloo and assigned him back to his old job, he gave in his notice and "chucked it."

(Interestingly enough, one of his co-workers on the railway was Martin Byrnes, another Irish fiddle champion whose work can be heard on Leader records.)

At the time, he was 67 or 68 years old. Margaret had come into the Cecil Sharp House, center for so much of the British folkloric activities, with Peter Kennedy, who ran a ceilidh there. The first time she heard Michael, she said it "uplifted her" and she decided on the spot to team up. He liked to play two tunes written by Margaret's grandfather Robert Thompson, "Paddy Ryan's Dream" and "The Maid I Ne'er Forgot", the only ones Margaret asked him not to play because it upset her, started her to thinking about her grandfather, mother and father, and a lot of other musicians in the family now dead and "should be buried, I know." Michael simply changed the titles to "Gorman's Favorite" and kept them in his repertoire, but as Margaret says, it didn't change the music and it still made her sad. "But he had hundreds and hundreds more tunes out of O'Neil's Book."

They never had a rehearsal, according to Margaret, but just started right in playing together. Their legendary stay at the Bedford Arms lasted over seven years. They travelled all over together, including several trips to America where they appeared at the largest festivals. "Michael was always very kind and fatherly toward me, although of course I wasn't a child" says Margaret.

Just about the time they got together, Michael developed a serious ulcer, and the doctor told him there was no hope. Years later, the doctor asked Margaret what she had done with him to make him keep his health and continue working. "It must be the recipe is music" she said. A week before he died, when the ulcer finally took its toll, he was playing as well as he ever had.

"I had to go away for something," says Margaret, "and the girl who lived downstairs and who looked after him when I was away, Tessie Moore, said the phone rang about a booking. Michael jumped out of bed and said 'Why shouldn't I go and play?' and he got his clothes together and played on that Saturday night. The following Friday, he was dead in London Hospital. Although I didn't share my life with him, he was the greatest music partner you could have."

An excerpt from Captain Frances O'Neill's "Irish Minstrels and Musicians" detailing the background of Margaret's illustrious grandfather, Robert Thompson:

"It does not speak well for the spirit of the citizens of Cork to be so callous to the beauties of their national music as to allow a piper of such distinction to dwell among them unappreciated and unknown for so many years, dragging out a cheerless existence at the gloomy business of making hearse plumes.

"To Alderman Phair of Cork, an enthusiastic amateur piper himself, belongs the credit of discovering Thompson, and it didn't take the alderman long, kindhearted man that he was, to have his prize exconced in his parlor with the alderman's own pipes in his lap. At reed and quill making the newly discovered piper proved to be expert, and before an hour had elapsed Gillabey House resounded with the merry music of the Union Pipes such as its astonished proprietor had not heard in a lifetime. Thompson's performance was a revelation.

"Installed as teacher of his art at the newly organized Cork Piper's Club, of which Alderman Phair was president, his name and fame spread like fire on a mountain. At concerts, entertainments and festivities of all kinds, he was the great attraction, but the conviviality common to such occasions proved disastrous to his health, which had been far from robust for years.

"Thompson, who had a cool finger and splendid execution, took First Prize among thirteen competitors at the first Feis Ceoil at Dublin in 1897, and repeated his triumph at Belfast the following year. Lest his continuous success discourages less gifted pipers from competing, the committee formulated a rule under which he was ineligible to enter future contests.

"Equally at home playing Strathspeys, waltzes and quadrilles, his repertoire was by no means confined to Irish music. Yet he had his peculiarities in a musical way: an aversion to "The Fox Chase" and to the humming of the drones being the most pronounced. The latter can hardly be viewed as an evidence of fine musical taste, for few sounds produced by nature or art are more soft and soothing than the mellow hum of well-tuned drones of the Union Pipes. Unsupported by them, the tones of the chanter lose much of their charm, and it has been noticed that a piper's dislike of the sustained tones of the drones is always associated with his inability to tune them properly.

"Bob" Thompson, with some members of his family, was born at Lisburn, County Antrim, although his father hailed from Bally Clough, a small village near Mallow in County Cork. The latter was an Irish scholar and one-time teacher of the Irish language at Belfast. He was also a skillful performer on the Union Pipes, and taught the rudiments of the art to his son, who had inherited his musical tastes and later took lessons from Daniel Crilly, noted Dublin player. Involved in financial difficulties (brought about) by the introduction of machinery and by domestic infelicities, Bob was reduced to the necessity of pawning his pipes. When Paddy Meade's pawnshop was wrecked by fire soon after both pipes and prospects perished with it. The forlorn piper considered that the curtain had finally fallen on his piping.

"Mr. Wayland, founder and secretary of the Cork Piper's Club, to whom we are indebted for a vast fund of information in this and other cases, says: 'Thompson was a nice man to talk to, most conversational, and above all modest as to his own abilities as a piper and reed maker.'

"With Tim Murphy, a champion step-dancer, Thompson once went to play at a concert at Mitchelstown. When Mr. Wayland called the manager's attention to the curious coincidence that the piper was a maker of hearse plumes while the dancer was a builder of coffins, the witty Milesian carelessly answered: 'Oh well, if they are both in the funeral business I don't think there's any necessity for a rehearsal!'

"On another occasion, while returning by train from Schull, a remote town in West Carberry where he had been repeatedly engaged to play at concerts, he was entertaining Edward Cronin, brother of Reverend Dr. Cronin, editor of the Buffalo Catholic Times, and Mr. M. Donovan of Skibbereen, with a round or two of "The Dear Irish Boy", a telegram was received announcing

the death of Thompson's mother. His reverence and the journalist humbly apologized for asking him to play, not knowing of his mother's illness. Nothing disconcerted by the sad news, the bereaved orphan continued playing the plaintive melody, casually remarking, 'Wisha, then, 'twas time for her, after her ninety-three years.' All three are now in the land of shades, and all three-nature's noblemen have left their impress on their times.

"The insistent friendship and misdirected hospitality of his admirers, too often a source of inconvenience and embarrassment, eventually ruined Thompson's health utterly, and he died early in 1903. Two of his three living sons are skilled violinists, Mattie being engaged in teaching a violin class at Schull. Another married the daughter of Dick Stephenson, the celebrated piper.

"Poor Robert Thompson, though not blessed with much of this world's wealth, enjoyed the fullness of deserved popularity during the later years of his checkered life, and in death he has the honor of taking his final rest beside another famous Corkman, Collins the explorer, in the elevated and picturesque old churchyard of Curra-kippane, a few miles above the city on the banks of the river Lee."

(The above quotation was researched by Michael Gorman and included in this booklet by his request.)

NOTES ON THE SONGS:

"Her Mantle So Green" is Margaret's own air to a song she found in a book called "Irish Street Ballads" (Colm Olochlainn, pub. Corinth Books, Inc. 1960) about the famous Battle of Waterloo. "The Rose of Mooncoin" refers to a village in Kilkenny where "all the hurling champions come from." "The Cottage with the Horseshoe O'er the Door" was learned by Margaret from a man named Tynan, who was over 80 years old at the time. He lived in Castle Blaney, County Monaghan, and wrote down these words in about 1945 along with "The Turfman from Ardee" which has so many marvelous double entendres in it. He said that he learned it from the McNulty Family of Donegal, who had recorded it on an old 78 rpm record. "It's Better to be Single than a Poor Man's Wife" is Margaret's set of words to a tune called "The Cuckoo's Nest."

According to Margaret, "The Limerick Rake" is an old street ballad set to the tune of a jig written by her grandfather called "Castle Comer." "The Leprechaun" was a popular stage song in the 1890's, published first in "Ancient Irish Music" by P.W. Joyce, who wrote it to

a tune he collected in Limerick sometime in the 1850's. It is often referred to in anthologies as a traditional song. (This from Ewan McColl) Margaret remembers that she saw it as a poem in her schoolbooks and heard it sung by John MacCormick, the world famous Irish tenor.

The song here called "Still I Love Him" has been sung with many variations and by many singers. Here, Margaret brings in the incident when she took the letter to the Lord Mayor of London. She also speaks about incidents during her seven-year stay singing at the Bedford Arms in Camden Town near London. It is originally a song from Northumberland.

In his book "Irish Songs of Resistance", Patrick Galvin says the following about the "Bold Fenian Men" (the organization, not the song): "The importance of the Fenians lies in their representation of the aims of the United Irishmen, in its manifestation to the whole world of Ireland's demand for complete independence, in its reintroduction of Irish claims into the programme of progressive movements in England, in its absolute rejection of sectarianism, in its standard of complete fidelity and steadfastness, of disciplined manliness, in its unmistakably democratic character and intentions. That its enemies well understood its potential is plainly demonstrated by the famous and appalling dictum that Hell is not hot enough nor Eternity long enough to punish the Fenians."

One of Margaret's identifications in Ireland is as "The Guinness Lady", since she has advertised the rich black stout malt liquor far and wide. This is a song written by Joe O'Grady, a man who worked at the famous brewery for over 50 years. Joe was well-loved by his fellow workers, and was both a barrel cooper and a "charge hand" or foreman who knew how to supervise all other jobs. He often wrote verses and articles for the Guinness Harp, an in-house publication of the brewery. Joe wrote many songs for Margaret, but after he wrote this one the company gave him permission to "allow" her to record and broadcast it. Joe died in 1962.

Side A, Band 1

HER MANTLE SO GREEN

As I went out a walking one morning in June
To view the fine spots and the meadow in bloom,
I spied a young damsel, she appeared like a queen,
In her costly fine robes and her mantle so green.

I stood in amaze, I was caught by surprise.
I thought her an angel that fell from the skies.
Her eyes like diamonds, her cheeks like the rose,
She's one of the fairest that nature composed.

Says I, "Pretty fair maid, will you come with me,
And we'll join in wedlock and married we'll be.
I'll dress you in rich vestals (vestments), you'll
appear like a queen,
In your costly fine robes and you mantle so green."

She says, "My young man, you must be refused,
For I'll wed no man, and you must be excused.
For the green fields I'll wander, with the sun all
in view,
For the lad I love best lies in famed Waterloo."

"Since you are not married, tell me your lover's name.
It might be in battle I might know the same."
"Draw near to my garment, and there you will see
His letters embroidered in our mantle so green."

In the raising of her mantle, 'tis there I behold
His name and his surname in letters of gold.
Young Willie O'Reilly appeared in my view.
He was my chief comrade in famed Waterloo.

And as he was a-dying I heard his last cry.
"If you were here, lovely Nancy, I'd be willin' to die."
And that is the truth, and the truth I declare,
And here is a token, a gold ring you'll wear.

Side B, Band 3

THE ROSE OF MOONCOIN

How sweet 'tis to roam
By the sunny Suir stream,
Where the thrush and the robin
Their sweet notes entwine,
On the banks of the Suir
That flows by Mooncoin.

Oh Molly, dear Molly,
It breaks my fond heart
To know that we two
Forever must part.
But I'll think of you, Molly,
While the sun and moon shine,
On the banks of the Suir
That flows by Mooncoin.

(Chorus)

Flow along, lovely river,
Flow gently along.
By your waters so sweet
Sounds the lark's merry song.
On your green banks I'll wander

Where first I did join
With you, lovely Molly,
The Rose of Mooncoin.

THE TURFMAN FROM ARDEE

For the sake of health, I took a walk one morning
in the dawn.
I met a jolly turfman on the road, as I went on.
A friendly conversation came between that man and me.
And that's how I became acquainted with the turfman
from Ardee.

Oh we chatted very freely as we jogged along the road.
Says he, "My ass is tired, and I'd like to sell my load."
I've had no refreshment since I left my home, you see,
And I'm tired out of travellin'," says the turfman from
Ardee.

Says I, "My friend, your cart is worn, your ass is
very old.
It must be twenty summers since that animal was
foaled."
Yoked in a trap when he was born, September '43,
And he cantered for the midwife," says the turfman
from Ardee.

"I know, me friend, me cart is worn,
But it's tough old Irish wood.
It must be in use since the time of Noah's flood.
The harness that was on his back was made by Sam McGhee,
And he's dead these two and twenty years," said the
turfman from Ardee.

"And many a time I abused this beast with this rough
hazel rod,
But I must admit I never did see poor old Jack unshod.
The axel never wanted grease, save one year out of three.
It's the real old Carrick axel," says the turfman
from Ardee.

Side A, Band 6

IT'S BETTER TO BE SINGLE THAN A POOR MAN'S WIFE

Before I got married, sure I used to sport and play,
But now that I'm married, sure the kids is in me way
It's a weary, weary life, it's a weary, weary life,
And it's better to be single than a poor man's wife.

Before I got married, sure I used to wear a shawl,
And now that I am married, sure it's hanging in the
paw.
It's a weary, weary life, it's a weary, weary life,
And it's better to be single than a poor man's wife.

When I got married, sure I had a hat and veil,
And now that I'm married, sure I've rags to my tail.
It's a weary, weary life, it's a weary, weary life,
And it's better to be single than a poor man's wife.

Before I got married, sure I had a standing bed,
And now that I'm married, sure I've straw to my head.
It's a weary, weary life, it's a weary, weary life,
And it's better to be single than a poor man's wife.

Side B, Band 1

THE LIMERICK RAKE

I am a young fellow sho's easy and bold.
From Castletown Connors I'm very well known.
In Newcastle West I spent many a note
With Katy and Judy and Mary.

My father rebuked me for being a rake,
And spending my time in such frolicksome ways.
But I'll never forget the sweet nature of Jane.
"Agus f'again id siúd mar atá sé."

My father he reared me to reap and to mow,
To plow and to harrow, to reap and to sow.
My hear bein' so weary, I dropped it so low,
I set out in a high speculation.

On paper and parchment they taught me to write,
And Euclid and grammar, they opened my eyes.
In multiplication, the truth it was bright.
"Agus f'again id siúd mar atá sé."

If I chanced for to go to the town of Rathkeale
All the girls around me would flock to the square.
Some gave me a bottle, and others, sweet cakes,
To treat me unknown to their parents.

There was one from Ashkeaton and one from the Pike,
And one from Arda me heart has beguiled.
Though, bein' from the mountains, her stockin's was
white.
"Agus f'again id siúd mar atá sé."

To quarrel for riches I ne'er was inclined,
For the greatest of misers must leave them behind.
I will purchase a cow that will never run dry,
And I'll milk her by twistin' her hours.

John Damer of Shrone has plenty of gold,
And Devonshire's treasures had twenty times more,
So he lays on his back amongst nettles and stones.
"Agus f'again id siúd mar atá sé."

If I chance for to go to the market of Croom,
With a cock in me hat and me pipes in full tune,
I'm welcomed at once and brought up to the room
Where Bacchus is sportin' with Venus.

Now as Peggy and Jean from the town of Bruree, Bruff,
And Biddy from Brook, and we all in a spree,
Such a combing of locks there was about me,
"Agus fágaim id síud mar ata sé."

"Agus fágaim id síud mar ata sé." This is Gaelic for
a basic philosophical concept adopted for survival
purposes: Leave it as it is. (Let well enough alone.)

Side B, Band 3

DOWN BY THE LIFFEYSIDE (The Guinness Song)

Come all you thirsty tourists,
And travelers everywhere,
I'll sing to you a verse or two
In a grand old Irish air,
It's all about that famous stout
That's known the world wide,
And it's made for you, this lovely brew,
Down by the Liffeside.

If you want to see their grand brewery,
At the top of James' Street,
Don't make a fuss, just take a bus
Or travel on your feet.
That well-known sight is on the right,
At the door there stands a guide
Who will point out to you where the stout is made
Down by the Liffeside.

There, barges neat, nigh Watling Street,
Rock gently to and fro.
With winch and sling the barrels swing
Into the hatch below.
With holds and decks full of "Double X"
They sail down with the tide,
All specially made for the foreign trade,
Down by the Liffeside.

And if you stray Glasnevin way,

When some old friend is dead,
The mourners stand with hat in hand
As the funeral prayers are said.
The tears are spilled, the graves is filled,
Their eyes they quickly dry
With a pint or two in the Brian Boro
Down by the Liffeside.

Come fill your glasses to the brim
And drink a toast with me:
"To the noble house of Guinness
And their world-famed brewery!"

Our Irishmen are proud of them,
And their products true and tried.
Long may they live, and employment give,
Down by the Liffeside!"

Side B, Band 5

STILL I LOVE HIM

A promoter named Raymond, he did sign us on
To go over to London to sing an Irish song.
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

We then went to Dublin to see the Lord Mayor,
Who gave us a letter to take over there.
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

We then went to London, that city of renown,
And when I got there they put on my crown.
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

I went into the Mayfair, the Duke I declare,
The way he did look when he did see us there!
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

Now the great royal show band were with us one night,
In the Royal Alber Hall I sang with delight.
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

I went to the window to whistle him out;
The music was going and I was left out!
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

Out of me bounty he bought me a shawl,
And the first day I wore it I tattered it all.
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

I went into the Bedfor, he bough me a stout.
Before I could drink it, he ordered me out!
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

I come to the end now, my verses are out.
If you want any more, I'll have Guinness's Stout.
Still, I love him, I'll forgive him.
I'll go with him wherever he goes.

(At any given time Margaret is likely to change
the verses, the story, or the order of the verses.)

ABOUT MICHAEL'S MUSIC:

The following airs, according to Michael, were written
by Robert Thompson, Margaret's grandfather and the "King
of the Pipers.":

The Avonmore/and/Boys at the Loch (reels)
The Fermoy Lassies/and/The Pigeon at the Gate (reels)
The Kid on the Mountain/and/The Mug of Brown Ale
(single jig and double jig)

Among the remaining tunes, the Stray-away Child
(a double jig) was written by Margaret. As for the
others, I haven't a clue, not being an expert on Irish
music.

ITHO IN U.S.A. 