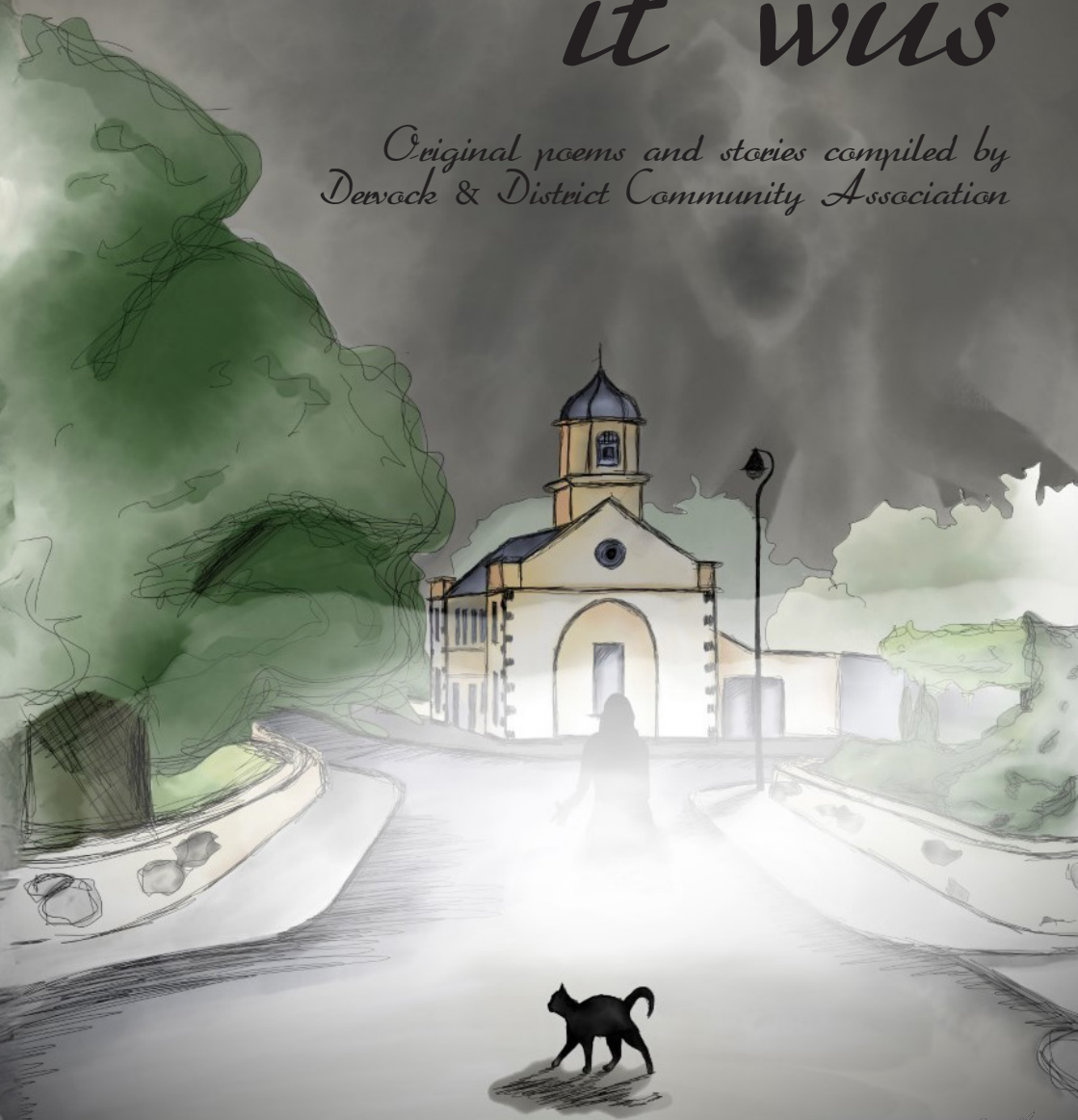


the wye it was

*Original poems and stories compiled by
Derock & District Community Association*



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Dervock & District Community
Association



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This book has been published as part of a project called “Dervock: A lens through history”, a community initiative delivered by Dervock and District Community Association.

It is the first of two books which we plan to publish. Every poem and story has been written by a local resident and their compelling words reflect the personal experiences, history, dialect and character of our unique and welcoming village.

Thank you to everyone from the village who contributed including Frankie Cunningham, Charlie Gillen, Rosemary Hamilton, Stuart Johnston, David Kane, Danny Laverty, Davy McCaw, Frank McLernon and Sydney Milligan. Some of our poets are no longer with us and we extend our sincere thanks to the families of the late Jayne Curry, Frank Hamilton, Jack Hamilton, Melvyn Irvine aka Biff, Elizabeth “Lilly” McIntyre, John McNicholl and Dan Laverty for the opportunity to reproduce their work. Also, special appreciation to Darrian Quigg, our Dervock born illustrator.

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Reverend Campbell Mulvenny
Chairperson, Dervock and District Community Association
August 2023

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SPRING.

Bluebells ring in,
The chimes of spring,
Snowdrops like shaded lamps,
New light they bring,

From hedgerows of cobweb tinselled ice,
Birds twitter to and fro,
Soon daffodils will mellow in yellow,
To steal the show.

Children playing with delight,
As days grow longer into night,
Spring the world awakens,
With his labour of love,

He carried the cross,
For all of us.
Rainbows and Easter bonnets,
Mixed in colour,
Sister and brother,
Must love each other,

We are all His fruit,
Some bitter some sweet,
The nails that pierced His hands and feet,
Spring to our mind,
He is the Lord of the land,
And He takes command.

By Elizabeth (Lilly) McIntyre



LOOKING BACK.

Flax we pulled till the fields were bare,
Counting the beets,
Wind and rain on our hair,
Twelve made one stook,

That was a shilling,
We were happy,
Healthy and willing.
In the evening we would settle down,

The wireless we would turn on,
The tree in the meadow,
Donald Peers on song,
The white cliffs of Dover, Vera would sing,

Lifting the hearts of the troops,
As high as the bluebirds on the wing.
Men walking on the moon,
Such an achievement,

Losing a princess,
What bereavement,
She was a rose blooming all alone,
Lifting little children, whispering,
“I would like to take you home”.

In our eyes she sits on a golden throne,
Little angels playing around her feet,
This would be her special treat.
My heart weeps for changes,
When looking back,

Drugs and fast cars,
Putting the world off its track,
A mother waits for her son to come home,
Something dropped in his drink,
He has gone, what a waste of life,
For both mother and son.

By Elizabeth (Lilly) McIntyre

DERVOCK ACCORDION BAND

One frosty night in January, in the year of thirty nine,
The Dervock bridge wall minstrels all assembled for to join,
The toasts went round with tonie wine, and they all loudly planned,
To buy instruments by installments, and train an accordion band.

They reached Belfast by motor car and met a German Jew,
They bought accordions at his shop and signed to pay them too,
When they began to celebrate their hearts were light and gay,
They played the “Boyne Water” and then “St. Patrick’s Day”.

They arrived at Dervock fountain at two o’clock in the morning,
They sang “Coming ’round the mountain” to keep the home fires burning,
They played at balls and concerts, where they gave a grand display,
And engaged a lady cashier their instalments for to pay,

When the autumn sessions they drew near they received a “billet doux”,
To pay all arrears outstanding to the weary wandering Jew,
When they told their sweethearts they were all in deep distress,
But they said they must have some cash for their hair waves, sport and dress.

So come all ye merry minstrels, who want to choose a wife,
To fill your hearts with music and waltz you through your life,
She may be free from earthly taint, she may be more than human,

But when you think she is a saint

You’ll find she is a woman.

By John McNicholl.

MY 5 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, HEAD FRIED ACCOUNT OF DERVOCK.

Dervock born n' Dervock bred
Sure to be my resting bed
Many friends have come and gone
But oor wee village, it's lived on

President McKinley and K. McArthur
Oor wee village goes oh so farther
In days of joy, delight or sorrow
It'll always be my place tomorrow

The people here are second to none
They're always up fer a bit o' fun
They lek a taunt, and tease they will
They'll steal some tyres aff McGill

Fond o' a drink, Beer and Bucky
Many turn a little nutty
They spend their nights in McKillop's bar
The cider flows like a Redring shower

The Walk o Shame, at 7am
On a Sunday morn pishin o' rain
It dawns on you, 'what the **** hay I done'
But you'll still day it when the next chance comes

Although a few, get up n'lee
Dervock will always be the place for me
Whilst sipping away at the Guinness foam
I'll always be proud to call here home

by Danny Laverty

THE ONE NO LONGER THERE

The sun beats down and dries the tears
Of those who stand and weep
The sad procession winds its way
Through our wee saddened streets

They halt to change the shoulders
A load that all would share
And hundreds follow in the wake
Of the one no longer there.

A farewell trip down memory lane
Where childhood days were spent
But travelled now with adult strides
A span on earth is spent

The church is full, just standing room
Their massing in the aisle
A glint of recognition
A nervous nod, a smile

They sing the psalm, the song of praise
The heads are bowed in prayer
The vicar says one last amen
For the one no longer there

The casket it is lowering
The grief is at its height
And those who try to hold it back
Are loser in that fight

Retiring for refreshments
Such memories there to share
They laugh, they joke and much is spoke
Of the one no longer there

by David Kane

THE WYE IT WUS

I was driving alang the road the day thinking about ool times
About grocery vans an' breed vans and milkmen on their rounds
But noo these things are all away an' little did we know
That Superstores were coming in to steal away their dough

What happened to the ootside loo way the bucket doon below
The Tilly lamp an paraffin tae show us where tae go
The hens up the half acre an' the soo oot in the shade
Mae granny bakin' sodas the best was ever made

The roadmen on their bicycles they kept the bunkers clean
Wae their scythe and spade tied tae the bar but noo they're never seen
The tiny wee grey tractors that run on TVO
But noo it's great big massive things and by God they can go

Penny chews the size o' breeks an' gobstoppers that we sooked
Orchards that we raided an their owners that we jooked
Bows an' arrows that we made wae sticks an' bits o' string
Nae Gameboys or computers then an' very little sin

They say the changes are for the best but God I dinnae know
I think it was a' better when everything was slow
But let me bide my time wae memories I can keep
An pass it a untae my wanes before my final sleep

by Melvyn Irvine aka Biff

THE DERVOCK BANSHEE

It was in the spring of '24 there arrived a bundle o' joy,
For that's when James Stuart Hamilton was born at Knockinboy,
When people passed the little house they thought it rather rowdy,
Then they soon realised the noise came from "Wee Gowdy",

The family then made a move just a wee stretch up the road,
And in Main Street in Dervock they made their new abode.
Now Jimmy boy he soon grew up and felt the need to roam,
It was the east of London he picked out for his home.

The pull of Dervock was often felt and maybe twice a year,
Sitting there on Dervock bridge James would soon appear,
It was on one of these occasions in the year of '45,
Then he and Des McAllister a scheme they did contrive.

With the horn of an old gramophone they thought they would rejoice,
And scare the folk of Dervock with the help of His Master's Voice,
Just at the hour of midnight there came through the gramophone horn,
The most unearthly moaning since the villagers were born.

It echoed up and down the back lane and the cry was "och och anee",
And everyone in the village felt sure it was the banshee,
One woman wept and swore "it's true" it was at my window banging,
While big John Green simply said "it was like a wean a hanging".

Another said that he looked out and there it was plain to all,
I saw it sitting there on the steps of the Orange Hall,
And yet another woman was so filled up with dread,
I was told in the strictest confidence that she had wet the bed,

The following night at midnight the call it came again,
And so the folk of Dervock with their fear they did remain,
The people talked among themselves and most of them just said,
If the cry was heard a third time somebody would be found dead.

The boys got out the horn again and moved towards the door,
But Maggie clattered down the stairs and said "that's it! no more",
I've got two pennies in my hand and to the phone I'll go
If you make that noise tonight I'll let the policemen know.

That night all was silent and the people breathed more free,
For they didn't have to listen to the wail of the feared banshee.

by Frank and Rosemary Hamilton

MAGGIE JANE McCANN

There's a fair haired young maiden who lives round the lane,
She sells tawny wine, beer and all you could name.

If ever you're thirsty, just join in a bunch,
And enter her bar for a glass of hot punch.

One fine summer morning the maid got a shock,
The fair folk of Dervock rushed in on a flock.

She called for a waiter but none could be seen,
Then she thought of young Parker who lived round the green.

Young Parker got up just as fast as he could,
And he rushed round the corner without any food.

He ran to the kitchen to join in the fun,
But there sat the maiden exhausted and done.

She says my young fellow you're one minute late,
For the fair folk of Dervock went out the back gate.
Farewell my young fellows and don't stop to smile,
For you're going to stop Hitler - from crossing in style

And when the war is over we'll join in a bunch
And enter your bar for a glass of hot punch.

by Jack Hamilton and Stuart Johnston



FRAE LITTLE ACORNS

I am Orange; with a slight tinge of Green
Muscular, Athletic – and yes somewhat Lean
I court two Lords – yet myself; working class
Perceived by others as simply being trash

So let's walk and learn – together aul freen
I've culture, heritage and much, much more;
Where do I start – that shows the allure?
The Green fields of France – the Glitter of Gold

My Sons – so proud – there's more to be told
I hope I've given you enough of a lure
Crossing so slowly through my fields and 'Straham'
Knee deep in water – caused by that Dam

That floods the fields – to create the 'Blue',
I'm connected to Lord Nelson and the 'Waterloo'
The best of the linen – let's toast – a dram
Cascading coloured ticker and a winner's tape

My Billy, my Ken – a kiss on the nape
My two boys – who became number ones,
A President, an Olympian – two of my Sons
Others can't believe – mouth wide open – Agape!

My Sentries Howl!! – It's started to rain
Ducks file up – like carriages on a train
A granite reminder – of a Landlord so Grand
Rebuilt my homes – and – harvested my land
For both of my families – this he maintained.
Remember at the start – I was more Orange than Green
A fact, that's true – but I am also keen -

That no matter what colour, religion you are
One thing for me – which it will never mar
Me – Aul Dervock – calling you my Freen.

by Frankie Cunningham

TEDDY

A well renowned publican was ordered by his wife to go “*er tae the Co and git some groceries*”. In his haste, he forgot to close the door giving the family pet ‘Teddy’ [a bitsa a colloquial term for a dog of different breeds]. Travelling er the Fairhill til he got tae the opening he exchanged pleasantries wae his old friend Johnny Gallagher – who was passing on his motorcycle.

In acknowledging this renowned publican; Mr Gallagher sounded his horn – to which ‘Teddy’ started to run after the motorcycle. All I can record is that thereafter – a string of expletives – cast doubts on the dog’s pedigree. Turning the corner – did William – not run slap bang into Rev McIlmoyle [another old family freen] – who without breaking stride and changing facial expression – said “Don’t worry Willie – I don’t think the dog could ride it, even if it did catch him”.

by Frankie Cunningham



MAE GRANDA'S BLAKSMITHS SHAP

The auld blaksmiths shap in Dervock,
Ah'l niver see it again,
It wus in through Canning's gateway,
An doon the auld bak lane.

Mae Granda wus Willy McConaghie,
The best blaksmith ye ever seen,
He could play a tune on the anvil,
That would serenade a Queen.

Whun Ah'd be commin hame fae skool,
Ah'stap tae hear the craic,
An Ah'd stan an blo the bellows,
In mae Granda's blaksmiths shap.

Yea cud hear the ring o' the anvil,
Fae Derrykeighan oot tae the Strone,
Aye! that wus Granda making horseshoes,
For Patsy McCann's auld roan.

A horseshoe hung upon the dure
It wus lake a sign fae God,
An the farmers come frae miles aroon,
Tae get thoor horses shod.

There wus Wully Peden an Davy Doran,
Wullie McKay an Louie Blak,
They a' brought thoor horses,
Tae mae Granda's blaksmiths shap

Mae Granda worked frae dawn tae dusk,
He never seemed tae tire,
An the sweet wus rinnin doon his cheeks,
As he took the irons frae the fire.

Wae a Widbine hingin fae his lips
He'd gie his heed a rub,
Saaing "al be bak in a minit"
An away he'd go tae the pub

Aye mae Granda laked a stout or two,
He cud certainly throw wan bak,
An George Canning's pub was handy,
Tae mae Granda's blaksmiths shap.

The farmers they wud gether,
They wid argy an they'd hoot,
They dinnae seem tae bothr ,
Aboot who was atannin aboot.

The Rev R.J. McIlmoyle wid luk on
Wea grim determination,
An he herd some words he dinny learn,
Whun dein his education.

When the banterin it wid finish,
The'd clap each ither's bak,
There wis niver a dull moment,
In mae Granda's blaksmiths shap.

Willie Borlans donkey,
It had is all in fits,
Wan cowl an frosty mournin,
it slipped an dun the splits.

Them deys are noo a memory
An a sometimes wonner why,
The time shoold pass sae quickly,
An the years they seem tae fly.

We can tak aboot the guid auld deys,
But there niver commin bak,
When a stud an bloed the bellows,
In mae Granda's blaksmiths shap.

by Davy McCaw



KENNEDY KANE McARTHUR

In the famous cities of the world
Many tales are told
Of this peaceful little village
And its son who reached for gold.

For a native of this village
Kennedy McArthur his name
At the Olympic games in Stockholm
Brought his birthplace fame.

In the marathon race
'neath a warm Swedish sun
The gold medal that day
By McArthur was won.

As he entered the stadium
A young girl shouted loud
"Well done Ken McArthur
You've done Dervock proud"

by Dan Laverty

THE CAT

Hunger was ticht in mae grannie's hoose so I tane the notion o 'trappin a rabbit for stew
I pushed out through the briars an nettles an things getting soaked in the evenin' dew

In yin han I carried a battery lamp in mae ither a big cudgel o' thorn
Come hell or high watter I'd get is a feed before the sun rise wea' the morn

Somthin moved quick tea the side o' me an wea' fear I swung an heard splat
But when I litt it up wae mea battery lamp, God help us I'd kill't grannie's cat

O how could I tell her I murdered her pussy an me naw ten years o' age
Maybe she'd put me in the hans o' the laa an they'd lock me up in a cage

O woe is me o woe is me as I stud, the coul rattlin' mea teeth
Boys o in the mornin she'll throw up her hans shel be inconsolable wea' grief
Then wea' due reverence I carried it oot an stretched it oot in the road
Maybe some farmer in a hurry for market will rin ower it wea a heavy load

So I crawled tea mea bed an covered mea head hardly naw darin tea breathe
I dreamt o deed pussys an mae grannie in black an me tea carrie the wreathes
As we were lowerin it in the box gin in tea a spin an pussy was oot starin at me
Mea mouth was al dry so I started tea cry noo your forit yea killer sais she

Afore I got on the light I'm shakin wea fright she peared oor the enn o mea bed
Yea murdered mea boy aye you took mea oul life an left me lyin oot there for dead
Noo theres only sae much a weachel can tak as I screamed an fell oot on the floor
I spluttered an fell geen anither loud yell an lake a rodent shot oot through the door

An joost there on the stairs wea her silver hair mae grannie gathered me up in her arms
Sayin hush noo wee baby dinna be you so feart for wea me you'll cime tea nea harm
Ouch wood you luke at that you were scared o the cat it musta geen you a surprise
The oul cat geen me a stare it was mare o a glare for she knowed I tean yin o her lives

Noo pussy was never the same tea me as she fixed me wae her baleful big eyes
And o that night well mea grannie never knew joost who had got the biggest surprise
Noo there was me a bit o a wane joost out looking for a bit o fresh meat for the pot
An that mangy oul moggy oot on the scrounge got mere than it ever had thought

And when I luke back tea the night o the cat the moral o the story must haytea be
When a boadys in need o a bit o a feed it's nay night tea be chasin thees shee



by Frank McLernon

BAR STOOL LIFE

My life has been easy compared to some
Plenty of laughter with little fun
The laughter has been at my own mistakes
To cover the pain and many heartbreaks

I brought it all to be in my life
Refusing to listen and beating my wife
Drink came first before the rest
I always thought I was the best.

Life looked rosy though the bottom of the glass
But sadly the confidence didn't last
When I was sober I didn't care
Life its self I couldn't bear.

The pain of living was getting rough
Finding more drink was never tough
I was down with nowhere to go
Down and out with nothing to show.

For a life that was easy compared to some
I often wonder where was the fun
My life has changed without the drink
Avoiding death just at the brink

Born again maybe I am
A second chance to live like a man
So take my advice that of a fool
Think what you're doing on that bar stool.

By Sydney Milligan.

THE DERVOCK PRIVATE STILL

Some toons hae got a factory an' some a spinnin' mill,
But there's bags o'money tae be made in the Dervock private still;
The Dervock polis loked in vain an' searched a' roon the toon,
But the still wus dae'in over-time, an' niver cud be foun'.

The ither nicht the boys had got a heavy steep tae rin,
The still wus fairly hummin' amang the scrub an' whin,
Whun "polis, polis" came the cry frae aside the shiltered fire
Tae loase the steep or worse the still wus far frae their desire.

Twa boys run oot, tae meet the polis an' bumped intae them fair,
Yin had a game burd in hes han, the ither had a hare;
They jumped the daike, then onward fled, lake a pair o' frichened geese,
But they wur quickly follied by the brave an' boul police,

They run through whins an' rashes an' ower hill an' dale,
But the Dervock polis followed lake blid-houns on the trail;
Afore the chase wus endit the cock crew lood an' shrill,
An' they knowed the rin wus ower at the Dervock private still.

A special coort wus hel' nixt day bae an ancient magistrate,
He slowly wiped hes glesses an' rubbed hes aul' bald pate;
He sez ye're charged wae poachin', an' tae prison ye mann go,
The game is for the rich, ye know let puir mann hunt the crow.

The Dervock laayer, Piley Wright, had charge o' the defence,
An' wi' grate power o' eloquence he did address the bench,
He said, ye're worship, noble sur, ye mann dismiss the case,
The polis hae nae evidence but a lang an' weary chase.

The sergeant said, yer honour, me an' my mate baith swear
Yin had big cock fayson an' the ither had a hare;
We katched the prisoners poochin', an' pit the la' in motion,
An' for oor gallant brav'ry we should get heich promotion.

Oul' Piley saes, produce the game, ir else yer charge withdraw.
The polis brocht oot a banty cock an' a hare-skin stuffed wae straw;
The coort hoose rang wae merriment an' the justice lached hes fill;
He knowed the boys had led them frae the Dervock private still.

By John McNicholl



ROBBIE FAE THE SHORE

A well loved character - wee 'Robbie Boyd' *fae the Shore* [colloquial term for someone from around Dunseverick, around the shore-line]. Mr Boyd had an emphatic way of communicating connected to a slight speech impairment. In one of these instances 'Robbie' recounted "*that the grass was that short, the rabbits had tae go doon on their knees tae eat it*"

By Frankie Cunningham

THE LEGEND THAT WAS JOHN BORLAND

As the story goes – a renowned character from the village was gan oot the Stroan tae scour a sheugh for one of the local farmers. All he had with him was a sickle. Within nae time 'John' felt a wile hunger comin' oer him an oota naewhere this wild hare appeared in from of him, Instantly, Johns visualised Mr Hare being main course; without thinkin' John threw the sickle swirling through the air like a boomerang. It hut the grun, skited, an the widden hannle went where the hare least appreciated it; Suddenly with a squeal of shock and torment, the hare took aff wae the hook embedded precariously oer the corn field; it is said that there wudnae a been a stalk of stan'in corn left in the Stroan toonlan if thon poor hare hadn't felt itself against a palin stab.

By Charlie Gillen

Early one fine summer's morning, a well dressed stranger happened to cycle through the village, on seeing John Borland standing on the bridge he threw his leg off the bicycle and on saying how lovely the river looked and indeed how pleasant the surrounding countryside was, he politely asked what the salmon fishing was like and indeed if game was plentiful. To which John replied "*Well sir, if you ever need a nice bit o fresh fish I'm your man and if a pheasant is what you're after, joost let me know*".

The gentleman gazed disapprovingly at John and demanded in an authoritative voice, "*do you know who I am? I am the new District Inspector of Her Majesty's police force in Ballymoney*". After a few moments John shuffled his feet and drew himself up tae his full height o' six fit four and said, "*and do you know who I am*"? . to which the erstwhile friend said "*no, who are you*"?

"*Why Sir*" says he "*I'm the biggest liar in Dervock*" wandering off leaving a bemused Inspector to wonder just where his new posting had landed him.

Twarthy members o' the brig wa committee were stannin at the Co. corner hunkled up for they wur a pirfa demisher o' a shoor come on, I canny mine who it wus but somed'y says "*that's a damn't bad evenin noo!!*" to which remark immediately came the profound answer fae yin o' Dervock's philosophers "*Deid Ba Danny Watton*" Sin heed mae words "*the guid Lord daesnae makk bad days*"

By Frankie Cunningham

JOHN BORLAND AND SWALLA

He stud six fut four, a big broon hat he wore
An an a pipe that always reek't,
Hair that wus grey afore it's day
I'm hopin in heaven he sleeps,
For the mair he neither cud hae read nor yit wrote
He cud'a conversed wae the Queen,
What a pair thon twa made,
Ach the tricks that they played
Big John an hes freen Bunny Green,
I'll tell ye the story as he toul't tae me,
At the bar wae hes hat on hes knee,
As he supp't fae his jar at the enn o' the bar
In a sate that wus his bae decree,
Hes oul doag's name wus Swalla
A black an white bitch,
She gane throo this oul worl on three legs
Only notish't a need each time that she pee'd
An akward whun she had tae beg,
She wus tane tae a race tae try hir for pace
An tae see if they'd let the lass run,
They lach't whun they sa the shoartage o' legs
But they said g'won ahead for the fun,
Weel up gane the traps, an the doags al race't oot
But nae sign o' Swalla wus there,
Big John heed't down his oul face wore a frown
An his een show't the tears o' despair,
Wae that the boul Swalla stepp't oot on the track,
Twa pups at hir feet yin white an yin black,
The shock o the thing turn't John intae stone,
The laghin wus quat he wus not on his own,
She kiss't an she lick't them she nuzzlet thoor ears
An what iver she toul them it calm't all thoor fears
Noddin thoor heids they set aff doon the track
Joost inches awa fae hir tail, she lukkt ower at John
An she nodd't hir heid, sayin, trust me big man
I'll naw fail,

An she broke fae a trot, an tane aff lake a shot
 Tae they shane wur a blur joost black an white fur,
 Onward they flew as they tore up the track
 Niver yince did they iver luk bak'an on the last corner
 Oul Swalla attacked cut through an split up the pack,
 And fae thon stunned assembly a roar it wus heard ,
 Whun Swalla crossed the finish line
 An the pups come in second an third

By Frank McLernon

BED TICS

The legendary John Borland went to work for a local farmer at the corn thrashing many years ago and when the corn stacks were all thrashed he took the opportunity to fill his mattress, or tik: this was a homemade refillable affair and when freshly filled with new chaff this was the last word in comfort. John and the Missus got clambered up onto this well stuffed mattress, but alas! being fresh from the cornstack it was as we say *hotchin, flays, pishmouls and assorted creepin things*, Annie wus slowly but surely gettin et, so she complained profusely that some action needed to be taken by John and now to get rid of the carnivorous wee companions ; ever resourceful John got up, filled the pipe with half dry tay and half Warhorse, lit ir up and jumped back in, pulled the blankits ower is heid *and tane a half dizzen lang pulls blew oot the acrid reek and the bitin an chuwin stopped . John stuck is heid oot only tae fin the whole carnivorous assembly swayin in unison on the bed heid singin*
“Wait till the clouds roll by”

There were two butchers in a certain toon a long time ago, *they wur ey' tryin tae bate ither*, so McA he put up a sign seyin we supply meat an, poultry tae the gentry, so McB he pit yin up seyin we supply the aristocracy, McA countered with we supply meat fish and poultry to the Queen , McB clinched it with a new sign an it simply said

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

By Charlie Gillen

DERVOCK OF YESTERYEAR

There's a little village called Dervock,
Where the river Straham runs through,
It has reared many famous men,
Now you know it must be true,

The first I mention is his Reverence McIlmoyle,
A minister with two flocks within his toil,
One dipped for fancy prizes for the other,
A sermon on God's path,
In a little church at Carnaff.

There's the famous Bush Bridge,
One mile out,
Fishermen throw a line, to the salmon and trout,
To catch a ten pounder,
That would be a dream,
Not like the man on the TV screen,
No way will I kiss you and throw you back in.

O! now I must go on, round the Conagher Road,
This man William McKinley was born,
The call of faraway shores was on his mind,
He left that lovely road behind,
To seek fortune and fame,
So president of America he became,
That little road was worth its name.

Another bridge I have to cross,
Where the burn waters,
Are at their still,
Kennedy McArthur postman and runner,
First opened his eyes,

In a little house at the top of the hill,
One couldn't fill his shoes he had none,
But round the streets,
In his bare feet,
He delivered all the daily mail.

No High Tec or Adidas,
His stadium lights up
The African sky,
T'was there he ran,
The race of his life,
He's in our hearts,
and in our minds,
Dervocks barefooted marathon man
Of all times

by Elizabeth (Lilly) McIntyre

Marshall Huey;

If the heart of man,
Is depressed by cares,
The mist is dispelled,
When a woman appears.

Mrs Wm. McKay
Bellisle

Fall into the ocean from the deck,
Fall from your horse and break your neck,
Fall to the earth from heaven above,
But never ever fall in love.

John Steele,
Carncullagh.

Some sey kissin is a sin
I sey its nane ava,
For there wus kissin in the worl,
Since iver there wus twa.

THE BLA'KNOWE LANE

The slumberin' earth is wakin' at the biddin' o' the Spring
Upon the hedge whaur buds appear Ah hear the wile birds sing
An' whun upon this moarnin' fair I hear the sweet refrain
I mind the birds that use tae tae sing wae doon the Bla'knowe Lane.

The lane is lang an windey, there's sang in ivery tree
The roabin frae his flowery pirth puirs oot his melody
The blakbird welcomes frae the thoarn the risin' o' the sun
The nichtjars note lake a reaper soun's whuniver the day is done.

An' doon the lane juist near a bend a wee bit gray hoose stans
Dear wee bit hoose mae faither helped tae build wae lovin' hans,
An' in that humble cottage that faced the noonday sun
Yin summer day Ah started oot the race o' life tae run.

'Twas there Ah spent mae infant days an' played upon the flure
While bees hummed in the flowery bush that growed ayont the dure
An whun mae limbs grew weery an sleep oppressed mae broo
Mae mither rocked mae in the crib whaur I rock mae bairnie noo.

We searched for nests within the hedge mae sisters twa an Ah
We helped tae win the wunter's store mae parents spread tae dry
Alang bae thon green hedgerows we crept tae watch the rabbits gray
Or in the daisy fiels we whiled mony a sunny oor away.

We herded Kate, the blue roan coo, up bae the ha'thoarns ta'l
The cuckoo, coming frae the South gaen there his first gled cal'
An mony a time doon tae the burn al' barefit we wud go
Tae catch the scootin minnows there that darted to an' fro.

Aftimes in those bricht summer days up through the moss we'd heid
The startled hare wud bound awa', the wheelin' curlew cried,
We wur as happy as the lark that sang heicht owerheid
Or swooped doon upon hir nest whaur shéd hir fledglin's feed.

Those wur the happy, happy days frae care an worry free
O those wur days that alwiys wull in memory leeve tae me
An' should I tae the earths ends gang mae thochts wull turn again
Tae whaur Ah spent mae childhood days awa' doon the Bla'knowe lane

By Jayne Curry

MISTY MOONLIGHT

In the gathering mist, where moonbeams kissed,
Through trees standing gaunt and bare,
The wee folk listened, as dew drops glistened,
On the heads of all gathered there,
The music of old played on harps of gold,
Echoed on through their ancient world,
As they danced and swayed in their moon lit glade,
Lightly tossing their copper curls.

In a language that came before earth began,
Soft words wafted in the scented air,
Stay well away from the human kind,
Trust not those who dwell up there,

Their hair tied up with gossamer thread,
And eyes like black diamonds shone,
Their shoes were made of the beetle's horn,
Doublets wove from the hair of the fawn.

Silken tresses hung over their little dresses,
Adorned with tinkling magical bells,
Made by the elves dressed in russet and green,
And hammered on their anvils of shell,

The night sky was fading with late autumn stars,
Bidding all assembled to go to their rest,
For at the horizon far behind the big hill,
The sun was asleep in the west.

As the sun grew in strength, the shadows shortened in length,
No one ever would know,
That here down below, yes they had been here,
But none ever know where they go,

So just leave them alone, let them be on their own,
Their ways they don't wish to share,
For you could be cursed, or even much worse,
They could catch you in their magic snare.

To forever be doomed in a world down below,
A world never ever your own,
That's the curse so old, from the stories told,
Never to see what was once your home,

So don't stray far away at the close of the day,
Don't go where you never should go
For there are things abroad, between heaven and earth
No mortal's supposed to know.

Anonymous

D.N.A.

A wee boady fae Dervock met an Englishman alang the stran' yin day wae a serious odd lukkin big baste o' a doag , sez he what kine o' a brute 's that ye hae sur , the Englishman sez hes an Alpine long legged short haired boar houn', then *tryin tae be smert he sez* I believe he's a cross between an ape and an Ulsterman *sez the Dervock man,*

Boys a dears, he'll be related tae the baith o'

By Charlie Gillen

MY WEE STILL

It may have been your uncle's dare, to try a little sip
You'd cough, you'd boke, almost choke, and could nae feel your lips
At first it felt like poison, but soon became a friend
A comfort in the darkness, on whom you could depend.

The downside, well, I lost three wives, it really was a mess
Losing one is bad enough, but three, well that's careless
It's chalked up to experience, just added to the bill
To hell with them, and their opines, I'm happy wae my still

It's such a joy to taste that boy, fair takes your breath away
Reminds me of my courtin days with lovely Sally May
She was my first, and not the worst, but soon she made it clear
There was to many in this tryst, one had to disappear.

She'd santer and she'd chanter, a voice so high and shrill
It fair would cut right through you, drive a man to kill
Her final ultimatum, cut right through me like a chill
If you want these lips and body, you need to lose the still.

She was the first of many maids, to tread that worn path
But to threaten such outcome, could only rise my wrath
I'm a man of few ambition, but there's one that I'll fulfill
When offered such an option, I'll always choose my still

I hear the folk as they pass by, frae on the other side
Such a shame to his poor mother, he has nae any pride
I ask no one for anything, I'm no burden to the state
And how I choose to live my life's, nae open to debate

There's those that do protest too much, the bare faced hypocrites
Those pillars of society, nae crimes would they commit
Yet they lurch from the shadows, exchange the Queen's wee bills
Then slink away to contemplate, wae bottles of the still.

They preach that it'll take you young, lead you to despair
I'm fighting fit at eighty, though I've got more teeth than hair
Well that's genetics don't you know, their searching for a pill
But I am bald, my dad was bald, and he did nae touch the still

I wouldn't swap a single day, for my auld life's been grand
You might raise an eyebrow, you'd never understand
I've watched your evil journey, to mammon on the hill
You climb upon the weakest, I'm happy wae my still

I'm happy wae my still alright, it does nae ask for much
A little fuel to keep her warm, a gentle caring touch
Her gratitude is boundless, she appreciates my skill
She's my only, one true love, she's my own wee still.

by David Kane

J H Clarke,
Aberdoey Cottage

Kind hearts are the garden,
Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the blossoms,
Kind deeds are the fruits.

Dan O'Brien
Dervock

Better late than never is a comforting refrain,
Save when you reach the station
Too late, to catch the train.

KATHLEEN MARY

The traffic wardens of Ballymoney
Were few and far between
But of the few of them there was
Kathleen Mary was the Queen

From the High Street down to the station
Up and down she would trek
She even put a ticket
On Billy Murphy's bike

She booked them here she booked them there
She booked them hail or shine
They say she would book her Granny
If she was parked on a yellow line

When I'd be going into shop
I'd park outside the toon
The fear o God was in me
If I thought she was aroon

When Kathy she was on patrol
Ackey was always about
He was keeping an eye on Kathy
In case someone gives a clout

Now say what you like about Kathy
She didn't give a sod
She was only doing her duty
And was darned good at her job

by Davy McCaw

THREE SCORE AN TEN

Whun young an fit we niver think,
Three score an ten is joost a blink,
Then age comes creepin slow lake mist,
Oul times an freens are sadly missed.

Then throo yer thochts oul poems an sangs,
Transport ye bak whur ye belang,
Ye wrassle noo tae form a rhyme,
Tae save sich things for auld lang syne,

Whut if they cry ye fool oul blether,
Is't wrang tae tak lake oor ain fethers?
Thool say, thon crayter's by his prime,
He's wannerin bak tae thon oul times.

Whun wurd's fae lang forgotten youth,
Cam purlin ootae ilka mooth,
Oul wurd's an trades o' folk lang deid,
Leeve yince again in his oul heid.

Tae rip an tear, whun young is fine,
But mine noo weans, joost takk yer time,
Cawse whun young an fit ye'se niver think,
Three score an ten is joost a blink.

by Charlie Gillen

PRAITAS

Did ye gether tae a spinner,
Whun the deys wus shoart an coul,
Did the digger man keep kempin',
Tae ye curs't his verry sowl.

Did ye iver poo the praita taps,
An pile them in a bing
An burn them a' geen quattin time,
Whun they wur fun in simple things.

Did ye iver in the ashes
Roast a praita ye had dug,
Did ye eat it lake a banquet,
Wur ye blak fae ear tae lug,

Did ye iver in the moonlicht,
Bing up a praita pit,
Lake I dane sixty year ago,
An heth I min' it yit.

Did ye iver watch yer fether ,
Wae rashes thatch the pit,
Wae yer bak turn't tae the greeshagh,
O' the fire ye had lit.

If ye niver sa' or dane these things,
Them I'm feart ye miss't a lot,
Ach! I know it haes a bearin',
On the aches an pains I've got.

But the fermer then, wae whut he had,
He wrocht fae dey tae dey,
An him an nature dooble yok't,
Gane on thoor simple way.

They sey I'm uol an dotin',
An in the past I'm loast,
But tae the men o' yisteryear,
I'd lake tae drink a toast.

Here's tae the men whut know't the lan,
The saysons an the craps,
For the only praitas folk sees noo,
Is in plastic bags in shaps.

By Charlie Gillen

J.B. Ferguson
Islandahoe.

Here's to England, Scotland and Ireland,
Where the wild winds rant and whistle,
You can sit on a shamrock or sit on a rose,
But I'm damned if you'll sit on a thistle.

Anonymous

THE LADY IN GREY

Crossing the bog a few hours before the dawn

A short cut home as the full moon shone

The mist was floating just over the ground

Silence broke by an ungodly sound

Wailing and crying like that of a child

Not from our world or that from the will

This haunting sound was strange to my ear

My trembling body filled with fear

Should I walk or take to my heels

To try and avoid these chilling squeals

I had to know from whence this noise came

What tortured soul for this is to blame?

I plucked up courage and turned around

In the general direction of this crying sound

There she stood just off to my right

This ghostly figure of grey and white

My voice strained with terror I couldn't talk

So I slowly turned and started to walk

"Help me" she said in a dying tone

A whimpering sound as cold as stone

"I've wandered this bog for many a year

To you, young man, I bring no fear

Beneath your feet is a locket of gold

Bought for me by a young soldier bold"

“A strand of your hair put inside neat
My solider and I will once again meet
Take it you must to set me free
These are my wishes I give to thee”

In the empty locket I did as she said
I turned around and watched as she fled
Into the mist as if she'd not been
I couldn't believe what I'd just seen

Proof was to come I hadn't to wait
As I pulled the bar on my old iron gate
There at my feet was a locket of gold
When I opened it up a story it told

Two pictures inside with one turtle dove
A man and a woman so much in love
A soldier boy in his uniform bright
A beautiful young girl all dressed in white
That locket to me is more precious than life
It made a present to my dear wife
We kept it safe and told no other
The people inside my father and mother

By Sydney Milligan.

SADLY, WE IR NOO AT THE HINMAIST PAGE

Until we meet again,
In the street,
In the pages of a book
Or on any of life's many and varied pathways;

May the best ye iver sa',
Be the worst ye'll iver see.
An may a moose ne'er lee yer larder
Wae a teardrop in e's ee

May ye be iver hale an hearty,
Tae yer oul enuch tae dee,
An may ye iver be as happy,
As we wish ye all tae be.

by Charlie Gillen

