

Kenneth Peacock's *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*

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The harbour at Notre Dame Bay (photo Kenneth Peacock)

The largest and most varied of the various collections of Newfoundland vernacular songs, Kenneth Peacock's three-volume *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*, was first published in book form in 1965.¹ At a price of \$15.00 for all three volumes, it was a bargain, but unfortunately it has long been out of print and available only occasionally as a very expensive second-hand item.² This long-awaited CD-ROM version of the work will therefore be greeted with a very warm welcome by *aficionados* of Canadian folk music who have previously found it difficult to become acquainted in detail with the treasures that Peacock noted and/or recorded in Newfoundland in 1950-52 and 1958-62. It is, to put it bluntly, a "must buy" for all lovers of Newfoundland song and for anyone interested in the spread of English and Irish folksong outside the countries of origin. The aim of this review is to do two things: to explain and evaluate how Jim Payne and Don Walsh have adapted Peacock's print publication to this digital format (and how they have gone beyond print), and to provide as many examples as we have space for of Peacock's collecting, as a taster to induce anyone who does not know the collection to explore it further. Since the CD-ROM contains over forty photographs, numerous sound-clips, and over five hundred songs obtained from nearly one hundred informants, what we print here can only be a small sampling. But, as far as possible, our chosen musical examples will provide a

representative picture of the collection, except that, for reasons of space, I will concentrate only on English-language song.

Books are more convenient than a laptop computer to sit with in an armchair or on a bed, but the way they organize information is essentially linear. Stick this CD-ROM in your computer's external disk-drive and you are faced immediately with the option of exploring the Peacock collection in different ways. The main menu gives you six options, but one of them ("Help") did not work in our review copy, one is "Exit", and one of them ("Bookmarked") starts off blank, although it is a useful tool that allows you to store items you have selected in an easily-accessible place. That leaves three buttons. "About" contains a text file of notes by the producers, describing some of CD-ROM's features, such as MIDI wave files as well as audio-clips. It acknowledges some of the space constraints that they were faced with, and also points out some controversial characteristics of Kenneth Peacock's approach to collecting and editing. It is worth quoting for this reason:

There is a midi file for every song to demonstrate the melody according to Mr. Peacock's transcription of the music. For 268 of the 517 songs, there are Wave files featuring the singers from whom Mr. Peacock collected the songs. Due to space restrictions, only 58 of these include a full song; in the rest you will hear a verse and chorus (where the melody differs from the verse) to demonstrate how the song was sung by Mr. Peacock's informant....For the most part we have reproduced the collection exactly as it appeared in print. The exceptions are places where there were obvious typographical errors (very few for such a large collection) and a couple of misspelled place names...There are also instances in the collection where the Wave file will be of a different singer than the one credited in the Info Box. This is because Mr. Peacock often collected versions of the same song from different singers. Sometimes the version he printed in the collection was a composite version that he compiles from his various sources. While he usually credited the singer who was his chief informant or whose version formed the basis of his composite version, he sometimes had a recorded version from another singer.³

In short, most of the song-texts that you will find reproduced in the CD-ROM (as in the books) are Peacock's *composites* rather than the actual texts sung by individual informants. The fifty-eight audio-files of Peacock's tape-recordings of entire songs, on the other hand, necessarily reproduce what that particular informant sang. *So in most of these instances there is a discrepancy, often marked, between printed text and sung text.* And this problem can occasionally have bizarre results. For example, if you try to listen to the audio-file listed for Mrs. Wallace Kinslow's rendition of "The 'Union' from St. John's" (a ballad of maritime disaster), you hear another version of the same ballad sung by an unidentified man.

While we are on the subject of the "About" button in the main menu, I should point out that this is also where you will find five additional text files: "Kenneth Peacock's Introduction", "Kenneth Peacock's Acknowledgements", "Kenneth Peacock's Bio", "Résumé" and "CD Rom Producers Bios". The first of these provides the text of Peacock's seven-page introduction to volume 1 of the original publication, and the second does the same for the acknowledgements page. The fourth provides a brief statement in French about the subject matter of the collection, and the fifth gives some information about Jim Payne and Don Walsh. The third—most important for our purposes—consists of a brief biography of Kenneth Peacock by Anna Guigné. Although shorter than I would have liked, this is very useful, and the paragraphs from it that bear directly on Peacock's two periods of collecting in Newfoundland are worth quoting to provide some necessary background information on the collector himself in the 1950s:

In 1951 [Marius] Barbeau asked Peacock to take over the [National Museum of Canada's] Newfoundland folksong field research first initiated by Margaret Sargent in 1950. Between 1951 and 1952, largely learning on the job, Peacock concentrated mainly on the eastern region of the province, where he acquired an enormous amount of material. In such areas as Fogo and King's Cove which had no electricity at the time, Peacock had the singers repeat songs while he applied his training as a musician and transcribed melodies and texts, eventually taking down over 120 songs by hand.

Initially Peacock viewed folksong collecting as a break from teaching and composing. However, Barbeau was so impressed with his work that in 1953 Peacock was offered the position of musicologist. With the exception of Margaret Sar-

gent, no other individual had ever been hired specifically to do musical transcriptions. At Barbeau's suggestion Peacock spent the next several months collecting materials from the Plains Indians in western Canada.

In late 1954, in an attempt to re-activate his music and composing career, Peacock resigned from the museum. Nevertheless, as the Canadian folk revival movement began to take shape over the next several years, he was drawn into projects which enabled him to disseminate some of the materials from his Newfoundland and native-Indian field collections to the general public. In addition to a series of radio programs prepared for the CBC, at the encouragement of Folkways Records of New York's Canadian representative, Sam Gesser, he also compiled materials from his Newfoundland and native research into two recordings, *Indian Music of the Canadian Plains* (FE 4464, 1955) and *Songs and Ballads of Newfoundland* (FG 3505, 1956). He also collaborated with Canadian folksinger and revivalist Alan Mills, providing both songs and piano accompaniments for *Favourite Songs of Newfoundland* (1958), a publication still in print today.

Material from Peacock's first two years of collection quickly ended up in the public domain as well. Several numbers from his Newfoundland collection appeared on *Canadian Folksongs, Volume 8* edited by Marius Barbeau for American Alan Lomax's *World Collection of Recorded Folk Music* (Columbia SL-211, 1954). Peacock's ability to convert the folksongs he collected into transcripts also meant that this material could be quickly incorporated into such publications as Gerald S. Doyle's 1955 songster *Old Time Songs of Newfoundland*, and Edith Fowke and Richard Johnston's *Folksongs of Canada* (1954). Additionally, professional singers such as Tom Kines and Joyce Sullivan quickly drew upon his Newfoundland collection for their own repertoire of Canadian folk music.

In the late 1950s Peacock decided to publish his own definitive work, one which was broader and more inclusive than any publication to date. Each summer between 1958 and 1961 he subsequently returned to Newfoundland to expand his collection. By 196[2] Peacock had accumulated a total of 766 songs and melodies; 638 on tape and an additional 128 transcribed by hand, from over 118 informants dispersed throughout 38 communities across the island.⁴

Anna Guigné is the Canadian scholar who has spent the most time exploring and analyzing the original materials of Peacock's Newfoundland collection, so she knows whereof she speaks. Her general conclusions regarding Peacock's approach to collecting and

what he achieved in his field-work and his publications are therefore also worth quoting.

As a self-taught field-researcher, Peacock used his own aesthetics as a guide for collecting. Motivated in part by the growth of Canadian nationalism and a romantic sense of the past, his depictions of 1950's Newfoundland culture tended to exclude references to post-Confederation modernization. He also maintained a particular preference for older songs such as the Child ballads, often seeking out such materials from his informants. At the same time he was not exclusive in his collecting in that he also sought out British, Canadian, Irish and American materials, documenting for the first time ever music from the province's Gaelic and French traditions. Peacock also had a great appreciation for locally composed songs and specifically sought out this material. He recognized the historic importance of songs that he felt were of a lesser musical quality and, although he disliked Country and Western music per se, one or two examples of these songs are still to be found in his collection. Remarkably, through Peacock's own determination, a substantial amount of the material he collected was eventually transcribed and published. *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports* (1965) contains 546 items under 411 titles dispersed over 1035 pages. To date, it is still the largest publication of its kind pertaining to one province ever published.⁵

Evidently, then, neither in the original three-volume printed version nor in this CD-ROM version of *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports* do we get to see all the fruits of Peacock's collection on the island. The CD-ROM, in short, is an enhanced version of the book, not an attempt to put the entire Peacock Newfoundland collection on a single CD. It may be churlish to criticize the decision not to go the whole hog, since obviously an immense amount of labour went into doing what has been done, but I can't help wishing that we had been permitted to have the complete Peacock field collection. At the very least, it would have been nice to have been given the lyrics of songs as the singers sang them, as well as Peacock's composite creations. Peacock's composites may be—and in most cases no doubt are—more useful for a singer who wants to incorporate a given song into his or her own repertoire, but historians, folklorists and ethnomusicologists will be disappointed in most cases not to have the informants' versions (in 58 instances they are included, but not as texts, only as audio-files).

To go back to the main menu of the CD-ROM, the other two choices are "View Photos" and "Song Book". Forty-one images are initially displayed as

thumbnails but can be made larger at the click of a mouse. Unfortunately they do not enlarge to full screen size, but they are quite a bit bigger. About half of them are pictures of some of Peacock's more prolific informants, mainly during the period 1958-1961, although one of his early mainstays, Howard Morry of Ferryland, is included. The others are shots of unidentified fishermen, children, outports, fish processing operations, lighthouses, and scenic views. As this composition with an anchor at Cape Broyle and the harbour scene at the beginning of this article demonstrate, Peacock had a good eye for a photo.



Anchor and buildings at Cape Broyle (photo Kenneth Peacock)

With the "Song Book" button on the main menu we come at last to the heart of the CD-ROM. This is where we gain access to the songs themselves, and we are presented with a number of alternative ways of viewing (and hearing) them.

One option is the order in which items appeared in the print version of *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*. One obtains this arrangement by selecting a button called "Page", although it might more logically have been titled "Category". Peacock divided his

best tunes and composite texts into twenty categories. The first volume comprised children's songs, comic ditties, fishing songs, laments, love adventures, and love comedies. The second was entirely devoted to ballads and shorter lyrics about love in one form or another, but he subdivided this very broad category into disguises and impersonations, eulogies and songs of praise, ghosts, laments, lyrics, and murders. The third volume began with love tragedies but moved on to lumbering songs, murder ballads, pirate songs, sailor songs, tragic sea ballads, war songs, and a miscellaneous category that included religious and cumulative songs. Although one sometimes feels that Peacock's placement of items in one category rather than another was rather arbitrary (or even wrong-headed, as when a Newfoundland version of Child # 100 "Willie of Winsbury" is classified as a lyric rather than a ballad), these categories are in the main useful ways of imposing some order on a diverse body of material, and they help illustrate the range of Peacock's collection, one of its chief virtues.

However, the advantage of a CD-ROM over a book is that one is not stuck with a single mode of organization for the contents. In this case, one's choices are in fact quite varied. Alphabetically by title is an option, although when one examines this carefully one discovers a curious decision. All song titles that include the article "the" are grouped together under the letter T. Similarly all French titles that begin with "La" or "Le" will be found under the letter L. This method, which is, of course, contrary to conventional indexing and normal library practice, means that one often has to check the title index twice, first under the principal first word of the song title one has in mind and then, if this fails, under "The", "La" or "Le", as appropriate.

Another option is alphabetically by singer's surname, although it is not until you become familiar with Peacock's informants (and the kind of material that they sang) that this becomes very useful. But, for example, if you want to check out everything that Peacock's most prolific informant, Everett Bennett, sang to him, you can bring up all thirty-seven items in a block rather than having to hunt them down page-by-page, as was necessary when using the old print version.

Another handy feature is the tool that groups singers and songs by the region (such as the South West Coast or Bonavista Bay) in which Peacock found them. Similarly, one can isolate the songs collected at a particular place, say Seal Cove or Rocky Harbour. And if you are not closely familiar with

Newfoundland geography, there is a map provided to help one out:



The map is interactive, so one can click on either a region or an individual outpost on the map and thereby find immediately the appropriate songs and singers. For example, if one chooses "Codroy Valley" as a region, one gets an alphabetical listing of all forty-seven songs collected in the villages of Codroy, Doyles, Searston, and Upper Ferry. Curiously, however, some of the regions identified as such in the song listings do not appear as named regions on the interactive map. You cannot, for example, choose "Southern Shore", "South West Coast", "White Bay", or "St. Mary's Bay". And if one selects "Avalon Peninsula", one receives a listing only of songs noted in St. John's. Hence Branch, Fermeuse, Aquaporte, Ferryland, and Cape Broyle are all inaccessible this way, as are Port aux Basques, Isle aux Morts, Burnt Island, and Rose Blanche. However, all can be reached by clicking on their individual dots on the map, so this flaw with regard to regions is not critically important.

Apart from grouping songs by title, singer, region, place, or page, there is also the possibility of doing so by tempo, but his feature merely allocates all the items to "fast", "moderate" or "slow", which helps a little but not very much. I would much rather have seen the option of arranging data by date of collection, but this feature unfortunately does not exist on the CD-ROM. One is tempted to ask why not? Was it just forgotten, or was there an assumption that no-one would have the slightest interest in tracking Peacock's collecting trips year-by-year and month-by-month?

Three other useful features are worth mentioning. The audio files of a selection of Peacock's field-

recordings are perhaps the most valuable feature of all on this CD-ROM. There are also synthesized MIDI files which provide the melody of each song as Peacock transcribed it. These are functional but could have been made more attractive by choosing an instrument such as the flute rather than the tinny-sounding electronic piano that is employed.

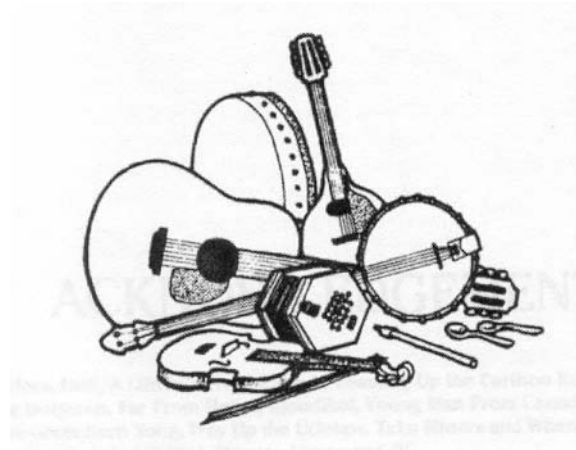
A second feature is the ability to select only those items for which a full-length audio file exists. As mentioned earlier, there are 58 of these, plus another 210 for which only the first verse is given. The latter are rather frustrating, although better than nothing, since one does at least get a quick sense of what a singer sounded like.

There is also a search engine which allows one to easily find songs by title (scrolling down through the lot is rather laborious) and which also facilitates finding songs by means of keywords. To try this out I chose the word "cats" and got two hits: "The King's Daughter" (a version of Child # 4 "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight") and "Young Kitty Lee". Making the term singular resulted in the loss of these two items but the appearance of five additional ones: two versions of "The Alphabet Song", "Feller from Fortune", "Grandfather Bryan", and "Lady Margaret" (a variant of Child # 77 "Sweet William's Ghost"). I wondered if "cat*" would combine these results, but instead the search engine told me I was looking for "catalogue" and would find it in "Gysie Laddie-O" (a version of Child # 200 "The Gypsy Laddie"). So I guess you have to be creative if you use this feature.

Anyway, the CD-ROM gives us everything that was in the print edition, as well as MIDI files of tunes, a selection of the field-recordings, and much greater flexibility in making our way around the collection. For these enhancements it is worth buying even if you already possess the original set of books. And if you don't, then there is no reason to hesitate: it is an essential purchase.

Nonetheless, it must be admitted that it falls short of expectations in a few ways. It fails to provide us with *all* the fruits of Peacock's Newfoundland fieldwork, although that may have been asking too much for one disk. It also fails to do two other things that I had really hoped to see. We do not get the actual lyrics that Peacock's informants sang, except in the minority of cases where there are audio-clips of the entire song. And we cannot easily follow Peacock chronologically and geographically as he went from region to region and outport to outport, although the collecting data that would have permitted this is in fact included in the song listings.

Criticisms aside, however, this CD-ROM is a wonderful resource, and the remainder of this review will be devoted to providing examples of the wealth of fine material in the collection. In doing so, I will try to do what the CD-ROM does not, namely, trace Peacock's collecting trips chronologically, and, where possible when giving examples, print the song-texts actually sung to him by the informants that he located and recorded.



First Years, 1951-1952

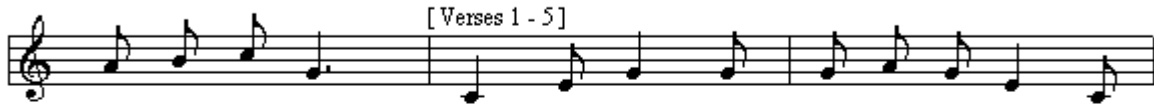
To begin with, Peacock apparently noted one song, an Irish love lyric called "The Foggy Dew", from a Newfoundlander, John Joe English of Branch, on St. Mary's Bay, in 1950, but that was evidently before he made his first trip to the island in the summer of the next year.

He focused his initial collecting in Newfoundland, which he mostly did with pencil and paper, on two areas: Bonavista Bay and the Southern Shore. However, he found one pair of informants, Lloyd Soper and Bob McLeod, in St. John's, and, perhaps because electricity was available there, he was able to record them singing a locally-composed song that he subsequently included in the "comic ditties" category in volume 1 of *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*. It appears that not all the verses that he reproduced in the book were caught on tape, but all those sung by Soper and McLeod in the audio-clip are part of the more complete song-text. This, then, is the melody and lyric:

The Feller from Fortune (Lots of Fish in Bonavist' Harbour)



Oh - - there's lots of fish in Bon - a - vist har - bour, Lots of fish right



in a - round here, Boys and girls are fish - in' to - ge - ther,



For - ty - five from Car - bon - ear. Swing your part - ner



Jim - my Joe Ja - cobs, I'll be home in the spring of the year.

Oh—there's lots of fish in Bonavist' harbour,
Lots of fish right in around here,
Boys and girls are fishin' together,
Forty-five from Carbonear.

*Oh—catch a-hold this one, catch a-hold that one,
Swing around this one, swing around she,
Dance around this one, dance around that one,
Diddle-dum this one, diddle-dum-dee.*

[Oh—Sally is the pride of Cat Harbour,
Ain't been swung since last year,
Drinkin' rum and wine and cassis
What the boys brought home from St. Pierre.]

Oh—Sally goes to church every Sunday,
Not for to sing not for to hear,
But to see the feller from Fortune
What was down here fishin' the year.

Oh—Sally got a bouncin' new baby,
Father said that he didn't care,
'Cause she got it from the feller from Fortune
What was down here fishin' the year.

[Oh—Uncle George got up in the mornin',
He got up in a hell of a tear,
And he ripped the arse right out of his britches,
Now he's got ne'er a pair to wear.]



King's Cove on Bonavista Bay (photo Kenneth Peacock)

Peacock's collecting in 1951 on the shores of Bonavista Bay was focused on five communities: King's Cove, Stock Cove, Broad Cove, Duntara, and Bonavista, and the first two of these proved to have the most singers. At Stock Cove he found informants Bill and Matthew Brennan, James Heaney, and John Mahoney, while at neighbouring King's Cove he discovered William Holloway, Pat Maloney, and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Monks. While from most of his early informants Peacock would note only one or two songs, both James Heaney and William Holloway were more prolific, supplying eight and six songs respectively, although some of these were noted on a subsequent visit the next year. James Heaney's repertoire included such comic ditties as "Doran's Ass" and "Bill Wiseman", a tragic ballad ("Johnny Doyle"), two love lyrics ("My Bonny Labouring Boy" and "The Lady and the Sailor"), two laments ("Pat O'Reilly" and "The Irish Emigrant"), and the version of Child # 4 already mentioned, "The King's Daughter". His wife, Lucy, moreover, knew such tragic ballads as "The False Maiden" (aka "The False Bride"), "The Rosy Banks of Green", and "Young Edmond of the Lowlands Low". William Holloway's repertoire was more varied, including a local version of a well-known railway-building song, "Drill Ye Heroes, Drill!", a lumbering ballad called "Gerry

Ryan", and a tragic sea ballad, "George's Banks". His love lyrics included "The Brown Girl" and "Young Kitty Lee" and a Newfoundland version of "The Banks of Pontchartrain" titled "The Banks of Penmanah".

The other communities in which Peacock found songs on his first collecting trip to Newfoundland were located on the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula. At Cape Broyle, where he took that striking photograph of the outport framed by an anchor, he found Mike Kent, Jim and Ned Rice, and Mrs. Rossiter. He would return the next year, and from the Rice family he eventually collected thirteen songs, plus nine from Mike Kent and one ("Old Granma") from Mrs. Rossiter. It was from Jim Rice that Peacock first obtained that classic song of the Newfoundland fisherman's seasonal life, "The Banks of Newfoundland", the tune and text of which is given on the next page.

Peacock returned to Stock Cove, King's Cove, and Cape Broyle in 1952, but it was in Ferryland that he encountered another of his favourite informants, a man to whom he would return for more songs at the end of the decade. This was Howard Morry, and there is a photograph of the collector and singer together, a rare example of Peacock captured on film while engaged in fieldwork.

The Banks of Newfoundland

The spring-time of the year is come, Once more we must a - way, Out
 on the stor- my Banks to go In quest of fish to stay.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major, 3/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are printed below the notes. There are some annotations above the notes, including a '2' above the first note of the first staff and a '2' above the first note of the second staff, possibly indicating a second ending or a specific articulation.

The springtime of the year is come,
 Once more we must away,
 Out on the stormy banks to go
 In quest of fish to stay.

Where seas do roll tremendously
 Like mountain peaks so high,
 And the wild sea-birds around us
 In their mad career go by.

Out there we spend our summer months
 Midst heavy fog and wind,
 And often do our thoughts go back
 To the dear ones left behind.

From where the wild sea billows foam
 There by cold breezes fanned,
 Out on the stormy billows
 On the Banks of Newfoundland.

At midnight when the sky is dark
 And heavy clouds do frown,
 It's then we stand grave danger
 Of our craft being soon run down.

By some large greyhound of the deep
 That rushes madly by,
 It's then we trust our lives
 To kind Providence on high.

It's when those summer toils are o'er
 We return with spirits light,
 To see our sweethearts and our wives
 Who helped us in the fight.

From where the wild sea billows foam
 There by cold breezes fanned,
 Out on the stormy billows
 Of the Banks of Newfoundland.



Kenneth Peacock and Howard Morry (Peacock collection)

Howard Morry's repertoire was a mixture of Irish, English, and local Newfoundland songs. He sang versions of such Child ballads as "Lord Bateman" and "The Farmer's Curst Wife", and such shorter lyrics as "Seventeen Come Sunday" and "The Soldier and the Lady" (aka "The Nightingales Sing"). He also knew several murder ballads, including "The Sea Ghost" and "The Murder of Miss Wyatt", and a pirate ballad, "The Flying Cloud". His local songs included this phlegmatic Newfoundland lyric with a pretty tune of Irish derivation, "Goodbye My Lovely Annie":

Goodbye My Lovely Annie

Good - bye my love - ly An - nie, Ten thou - sand times a - dieu, I'm
going a - way to - mor - row morn - ing Once more to part from you.

Goodbye my lovely Annie,
Ten thousand times adieu,
I'm going away tomorrow morning
Once more to part from you.

Once more to part from you, fine girl,
You're the one I do adore,
But still I live in hopes to see you
In Newfoundland once more.

Oh, now I'm on the ocean
And you are far behind,
Kind letters I will write you
Of the secrets of my mind.

There is a storm arising now,
You can see it drawing near,

The night is dark and stormy too
And all hearts are filled with fear.

Our good ship she is tossed about,
Her rigging is all tore,
But still I live in hopes to see you
In Newfoundland once more.

Oh now we're safely landed
And now we're safe on shore,
We'll drink success to those we love
And the girls we do adore.

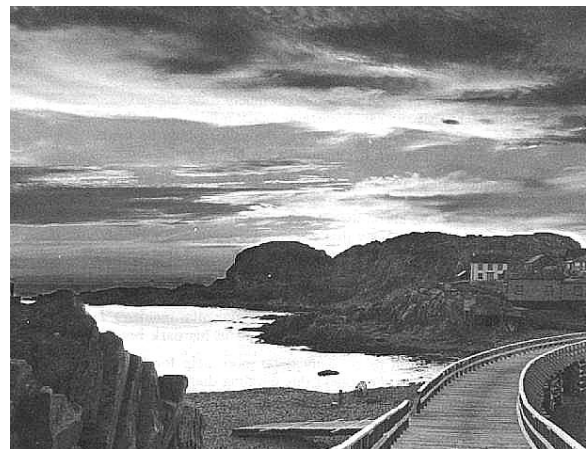
We'll drink strong ale and brandy too
And we'll make those towers roar,
And when our money's all spent and gone,
We will go and work for more.

Peacock's itinerary in the summer of 1952 took him back to Fermeuse, Cape Broyle, and Ferryland on the Southern Shore and to King's Cove and Stock Cove on Bonavista Bay, but he also headed further east and north to Fogo Island on the province's northern coast. Here he found a wealth of local music, with his source singers coming from four locations: Fogo itself, Tilting, Joe Batt's Arm, and Barr'd Island.

In Fogo itself Peacock's most prolific informant was Gordon Willis, from whose repertoire he noted twelve songs, including the popular broadside ballad "Polly Oliver" and the religious cumulative song "Twelve Apostles". Philip Foley of Tilting contributed nine songs, mainly Irish in origin, that included "My Bonny Irish Boy", "O'Reilly the Fisherman", "The Green Linnet" and "Napoleon's Farewell to Paris".

Many of the songs that Peacock collected at Joe Batt's Arm were also clearly Irish, for example Peter Donahue's version of "The Parting Glass" and Mrs. John Fogarty's "Erin's Green Shore". Harry Curtis was the inhabitant of this outpost who had the most

songs to offer: nine of them, including Child # 84 "Barbara Allen", the broadside ballads "British Man o' War" and "The Lady Leroy", and an unusual Irish ghost ballad called "Alonzo the Brave and Fair Imogene".



Sunset at Barr'd Island, near Fogo (photo Kenneth Peacock)

As for Barr'd Island, this was the home of Chris Cobb, from whose singing Peacock gleaned eleven items, including "Nancy from London", "Caroline and Her Young Sailor Bold", "The Lovely Newfoundlander" and a clutch of sea-songs: "The Fisherman's Alphabet", "Culling Fish", "For the Fish We Must Prepare", and "The Loss of the 'Riseover'".

When he returned to Ontario in the fall of 1952 Peacock had only explored the song culture of four regions: St. John's, a group of villages on the south-east coast of the Avalon Peninsula, a group of outports on the west side of Bonavista Bay, and Fogo Island and vicinity. He had been successful in his collecting, but in a sense he had hardly scratched the surface of what might be done. There were many large areas of Newfoundland that he had never visited, including the entire southern and western coasts and the Northern Peninsula. Yet six years would pass before he returned to the Rock.

The Years 1958-1961

When he did return to Newfoundland in the summer of 1958, Peacock found it much easier to collect songs using a tape recorder, and the vast majority of the sound clips included in the CD-ROM date from the four-year period 1958-1962. For the first of these summers Peacock decided to concentrate on the western coast of the Great Northern Peninsula, but on the way there he spent a day or two at Cormack in the Humber Valley. There he encountered two informants, Mrs. Alvina Coles and Mrs. Gladys Snow, noting "Jack the Jolly Tar" from the former and "The Sailor's Alphabet" from the latter.

The vast majority of Peacock's collecting in 1958, however, was done in three coastal communities on the south-west corner of the Northern Peninsula: Rocky Harbour, St. Paul's, and Parson's Pond. Peacock may have intended to work his way further north up the coast, but he found such a quantity and quality of songs in these outports on the Gulf of St. Lawrence that he had no need (or no time) to go as far as the Strait of Belle Isle.

At Rocky Harbour Peacock discovered Arthur Nicolle, from whom he would note thirteen songs that year and the next. Nicolle was a significant informant. The items that he gave Peacock included two lumbering ballads, "Twin Lakes" and "The Logger's Plight", the sailor songs "Young Chambers" and "The Girls of Newfoundland", such broadsides as "Lonely Waterloo" and "The Bold Trooper", and the pirate ballad "The Bold 'Princess Royal'". But

perhaps the song in his repertoire that struck home most deeply in Newfoundland was a broadside about a girl walking on a beach, finding the body of a drowned sailor, and then realizing with horror that it was her own lover. Peacock collected this from Howard Morry also, and the CD-ROM gives only one verse in the audio-clip, so this text may be a composite, although it seems not to have been tidied up editorially. Tune and text are given on the next page.



Arthur Nicolle of Rocky Harbour (photo Kenneth Peacock)

At Rocky Harbour Peacock also found Mrs. Annie Walters, who gave him fourteen items over the next four years. She had a very interesting repertoire. It included two Child ballads, a tragic one, "Lord Donald" (a version of Child # 81 "Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard") and a comic one, Child # 275 "Get Up and Bar the Door". In addition to "Lord Donald" Peacock classified two more of her songs as "love murders", namely, "Fair Fanny Moore" and "The Murder of Ann O'Brien". Equally gloomy, although their sources and subject-matter were quite different, were the sad tale of a forsaken lover, "She Died in Love", the murder ballad "Donald Munro", the tragic sea ballad "The Bird Rocks", and the laments "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie" and "The Indian's Lament". Mrs. Walters also sang a sailor song titled "Charles Augustus Anderson" and a press-gang song called "The Deserter", and she was the source for

As Susan Strayed the Briny Beach

The musical score is written on five staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is simple and folk-like, with many eighth and sixteenth notes. There are several double bar lines with a '2' above them, indicating fingerings. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

As Su-san strayed the bri - ny beach down by the Sli - go
 shore, She oft - times thought all on a boy her
 fond heart did a - dore; And oft - times in sad
 ac - cents her tongue pro - nounced his name, To
 love a sim - ple sail - or lad she thought it was no shame.

As Susan strayed the briny beach down by the Sligo shore,
 She oft-times thought upon a boy her fond heart did adore;
 And oft-times in sad accents her tongue pronounced his name,
 To love a simple sailor lad she thought it was no shame.

Her father being a nobleman and born of high degree,
 While she being kind both heart and mind, most beautiful to see,
 For many a lord of high renown for she shed many a tear,
 She object them all to her fond heart, being true to Willie dear.

“O who would love a sailor, or wish to be his bride,
 When all his life he do depend on a dark or stormy tide?
 But I will never change my mind although my Willie be
 Just guarded by one single plank from death and destiny.”

The following day the storm came on, the tempest seas rolled high,
 While Susan strayed the briny beach the tears rolled from her eyes:
 “Now tempest seas why had you rolled on which my Willie had crossed,
 Dashed high upon some wicked wave or else entirely lost?”

And as she turned to go away, one lonely look she gave,
 She thought that she saw something black a-floating on the wave,

In one quick look she knew it was the sailor's blue he wore,
When a boundless sea it did a-dash his body on the shore.

'Twas more than a woman's strength which drew this corpse on high,
And laid it down all on a spot where all around was dry,
And gazing on that body that's been all bruised and tore,
Till something told her troubled mind she'd seen that face before.

She placed a gold watch to his mouth to catch some sign of breath,
His colour was not changed one bit, his eyes were closed in death,
His manly form it being unstripped his skin like maiden's fair,
And stripes of seaweed which tangled all in his dark brown hair.

As she turned forth to go away, some more help for to bring.
'Twas on his finger she beheld this dazzling diamond ring,
In one quick look she knew it was the ring her Willie had wore,
She had placed it on his finger while last parting from the shore.

Come all you loyal lovers to view a solemn sight,
There's twelve young sailors dressed in blue and twelve young maids in white,
Just like some early blossom cut down in time of bloom,
Fond hearts have caused each other to be buried in one tomb.



Mrs. Annie Walters of Rocky Harbour (photo Kenneth Peacock)

what has become a very well-known Canadian folk-song, "The Maid on the Shore". Yet if Peacock had found valuable informants at Rocky Harbour, he would find even more prolific singing families at Parson's Pond and St. Paul's, a little further up the coast. Parson's Pond was where James and Charlotte Decker lived, and also their neighbour Nicholas

Keough. From Mr. Keough Peacock obtained four good songs: "The Nobleman's Wedding", "The Irish Emigrant", "The Beach of Strablane", and a Newfoundland version of a well-known tragic ballad about heroism and disaster in the northern woods, "The Jam at Garby's Rock". This was promising and suggested that the outport had been settled originally by immigrants from Ireland, but it was when he met the Deckers that Peacock realized he had stumbled on a wealth of traditional song that derived mainly from England, and most likely the English West Country. Two items on the CD-ROM are ascribed to 1951/52, but these dates seem to be erroneous, since Peacock did not do any collecting on the western coast of Newfoundland until the summer of 1958. He would return to record the Deckers again the next summer, and all told would obtain thirty-six items from them, six from James, twenty-nine from Charlotte, and one sung together.

James Decker's repertoire comprised two Child ballads (# 73 "Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor", and # 110 "The Knight and the Shepherd's Daughter") and two well-known broadside ballads, "The Jolly Butcher-men" and "The Maid and the Horse". He also sang a sailor song ("Bully Brown") and a humorous courting song, "The One Thing or the Other". Charlotte also knew both traditional ballads and broadside ballads that failed to make it into Child's canon. Among the former were "The Bonny Busk of London" (aka Child # 10 "The Twa Sisters"), "The Two Brothers" (Child # 49), "Lady Margaret" (aka Child # 77 "Sweet William's Ghost", "John Barbour" (aka

Child # 100 “Willie o’ Winsbury”), and “The Foolish Shepherd” (aka Child # 112 “The Baffled Knight”). The broadside ballads included “Blue Jacket and White Trousers” (a cross-dressing story in which, for once, the maid’s cover is not blown), “Bright Phoebe”, “The Dark-Eyed Sailor”, “The Elderman’s Lady”, “He’s Young But He’s Daily Growing”, and a murder ballad, “The Worcester Tragedy”. Her repertoire also included a sprinkling of naval and military ballads, such as “On Board of the ‘Victory’” and “Waterloo”.

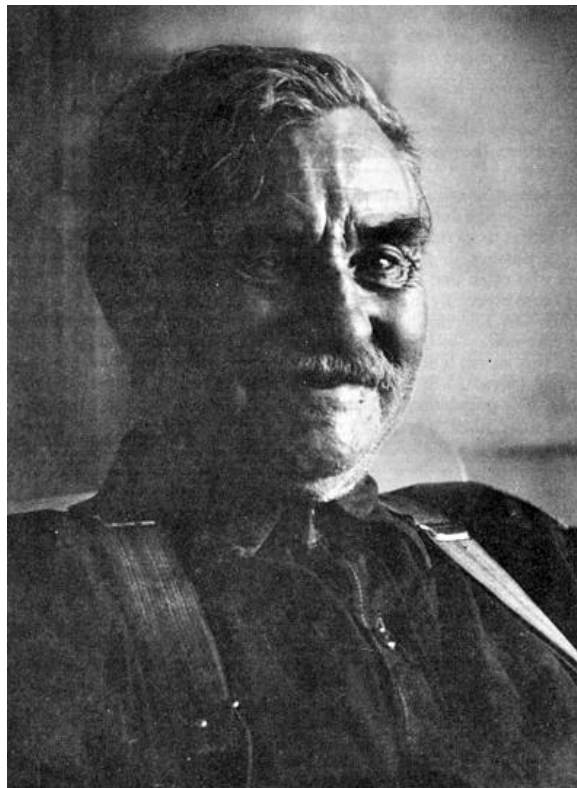
Not all Charlotte’s songs were cast in a narrative mode; indeed, Peacock particularly appreciated her love lyrics, which included “Flora (The Stormy Winds of Winter)” and “Oh Write Me Down, Ye Powers Above”. She also knew a fragment of “She’s Like the Swallow”. He commented that it was only when preparing Mrs. Decker’s songs for publication that he fully realized quite “how exquisite some of these Newfoundland love lyrics really are” and that “Aunt Charlotte ha[d] contributed more of them than other singers.”⁶ See the next page for the text and tune of “Oh Write Me Down”.



Mrs. Charlotte Decker of Parson’s Pond (photo K. Peacock)

It was presumably from James and Charlotte that Peacock heard about their relatives Mr. and Mrs. George Decker of Rocky Harbour, whom he visited

in July 1959. He had not discovered them the previous year, but the couple gave him over twenty songs, the majority of them sung by George.



George Decker of Rocky Harbour (photo K. Peacock)

To judge from his repertoire, George Decker had been a sailor or had a very keen interest in the sea and ships. He knew a good number of local ballads about shipwrecks, including “The Loss of the ‘Jewel’”, “The Loss of the ‘Shamrock’”, “The Loss of the ‘Sailors’ Home’”, and “George’s Banks”. Other maritime songs were the love lament “Willie”, an account of the rescue of two lost fishermen (“The Felings of Torbay”), and two pirate ballads, “William Craig and Bold Manone” and “The Bold ‘Princess Royal’”. George sang one lumbering ballad, “The Woods of Michigan”, a murder ballad (“The Murder of Alfreda Pike”), and a song he had composed himself about a local disaster, “The Sally’s Cove Tragedy”. He was fond of such comic songs as the mildly salacious “Kate’s Big Shirt” and Child # 278 “The Farmer’s Curst Wife”, but he also knew a few traditional ballads, including “The Cambrick Shirt” (Child # 2 “The Elfin Knight”) and a beautiful version of “The Unquiet Grave” (Child # 78) which he called “Cold Falling Drops of Dew”.

Oh Write Me Down, Ye Powers Above

Oh write me down, ye pow-ers a - bove, the
 first e - vents in young men's love, I
 have a jew - el all in my eye Where
 all my joy and com - fort lie.

Oh write me down, ye powers above,
 The first events in young men's love,
 I have a jewel all in my eye
 Where all my joy and comfort lie.

"I will give you gold, I will give you pearls
 If you will fancy me my girl,
 Some costly robes then you shall wear
 If you will fancy me my dear."

"It's not your gold do me entice,
 Or never will I answer your advice,
 For I never do intend at all
 To ever be on a young man's call."

"Begone you proud and scornful dame,
 If you prove false I can do the same,
 And there is no doubt that I can find
 Some other as pleasing to my mind."

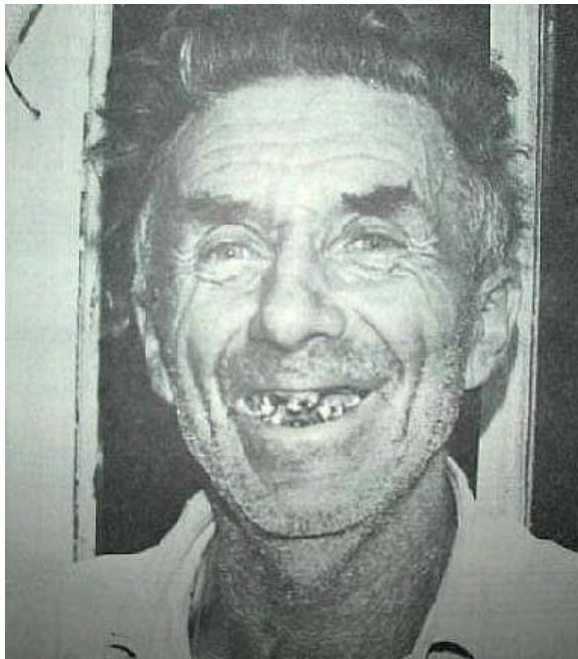
When he arose to go away
 She called him back and this did say:
 "Oh self-same, my heart is true,
 I'll never wed no one but you."

My roving days are gone and passed,
 My joy and comfort has come at last,
 How happy, happy I shall be,
 Since God has found his love for me.

The other community on the west coast of the Northern Peninsula that Peacock visited extensively in 1958 was St. Paul's. Here he discovered the Bennett family: Clarence, Everett, Jim, and Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Bennett. Together, in the course of two

summers, they supplied him with 87 songs, by far the largest quantity of material that he found in any one outpost. Everett Bennett, who sang 37 items, was the most prolific of all Peacock's source singers, and Freeman Bennett, who contributed 31 songs, was not

far behind. There is not space here to analyze in detail the repertoire of this amazing extended family, but a few highlights may be mentioned to give a sense of the breadth and depth of this community's traditional music. Clarence Bennett, for example, knew the comic song "The Derby Ram" and an old English pirate ballad "Captain Ward" (Child # 288), as well as "Hembrick Town" (a version of Child # 221 "Katherine Jaffray", and a fine American tragic sea-ballad, "Bound for Newfoundland" (aka "The Schooner 'Mary-Ann'"). Jim Bennett sang the anti-war ballad "High Germany", a humorous love song called "Tarry Sailor", and an impressive if rather lugubrious version of "Bold Lamkin" (Child # 93).



Everett Bennett of St. Paul's (photo Kenneth Peacock)

Everett Bennett's huge repertoire included examples of almost all Peacock's twenty categories of songs. His children's songs and comic ditties, for example, included "A Tale O Jests", "The Rich Wedding Cake" and "Three Lost Babes of Americay". If "The Indian Lament" was the only one of his songs classified by Peacock as a lament, there were plenty of tragic love songs and other ballads about murders and tragedies at sea. They included "Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor" (Child # 73), the extraordinary "The Bloody Garden" (which is reproduced on pp. 17-18 and is a variant of "The Bloody Gardener", the ballad that Maud Karpeles reckoned one of the finest she noted in Newfoundland), and (among others) the sea-ballads "Liza Grey" and "Peter's Banks". His love

comedies included "The Gay Maid of Australia" and "Roger the Miller", while his ballads of lovers' adventures and misadventures included "Lord Bate-man" (Child # 53), "John Barbour" (Child # 100 "Willie o' Winsbury"), "Watercrosses", "Oh No, Not I" and "The Golden Glove". Everett also sang a number of lumbering ballads (e.g., "Reid's Express" and "The Banks of the Gaspereau"), sailor songs (including "The Ghostly Sailors" and "The Drunken Captain"), and songs about war, such as "On Board of the 'Ninety-Eight'" and "The Bonny Bunch of Roses O". To say the least, it was an impressive repertoire, and, to be honest, I was really disappointed to find that for only one of Everett's songs, "Crockery Ware", is a full-length audio-clip included on the CD-ROM.

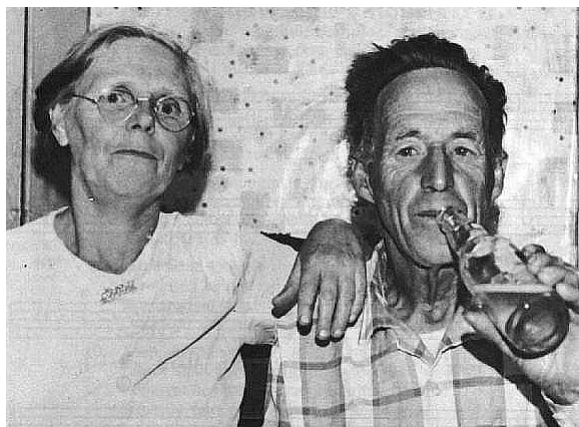
The same, unfortunately, is true for Freeman Bennett—in his case the full-length audio-clip is for "The Murder of Dennis Somers"—although we do also get to hear Clarence Bennett's "Hembrick Town", Jim Bennett's "Bold Lamkin", and, a delight, Mrs. Freeman Bennett's "As I Walked Forth in the Pride of the Season". Mrs. Bennett provided Peacock with ten songs, plus one ("The Lily of the West") that she sang together with her husband. Her solo items included a fishing song ("The Herring Gibbers") but were mostly love laments or tragic love ballads. The laments included "As I Walked Forth" and "The Forsaken Mother and Child", while some of the ballads were "Strawbello Strand", "In Courtship There Lies Pleasure", and the beautiful "Grief is a Knot".

As for Freeman Bennett, one hardly knows where to begin in describing his extensive and varied repertoire. He seems to have been one of the more eclectic of Peacock's singers in terms of the sources of his material. He sang at least three Irish songs ("The Finnigan Lasses", "The Black Devil" and "General Munro") and a Scottish one ("The Banks of the Ayr"), as well as several local originals ("The Blueberry Ball" and "Dennis Somers"). The majority of his material, however, was English. It included "The Suffolk Miracle" (Child # 272), "The Yorkshire Boy" (a broadside in which highwaymen are outwitted), and "Here's Adieu to Old England", as well as a number of English comic songs. Freeman apparently particularly enjoyed tales about unsatisfactory wives and he regaled Peacock with such humorous ditties as "Eggs and Marrowbones", "Cabbage and Goose", and "The Old Bo's'n", not to mention "The Finnigan Lasses", which ended with the complaint:

There's another bad habit she has,
Which I had a-liked to forget,

She never goes out to the privy
But always makes use of the pot.

Most of his repertoire, however, consisted of narrative songs with serious subject matter. Other traditional ballads that he sang were “Barb’ry Ellen” (Child # 84) and “Gipsy Laddie-O” (Child # 200), while his large store of broadside ballads included “Bold Wolfe”, “Captain Kidd”, “Gold Watch and Chain”, “Jimmy and Nancy”, “The Maid and the Horse”, and “The Plains of Waterloo”.



Mr. & Mrs. Freeman Bennett of St. Paul's (photo Peacock)

One other important source singer that Peacock found on the Northern Peninsula in 1959 was Mrs. Clara Stevens of Bellburns. He found a fair degree of overlap between her repertoire and the songs he had already recorded from other informants in the area, since she sang him versions of “Barbara Ellen”, “The Banks of the Ayr”, “The Cambric Shirt”, and “The Yorkshire Boy”. But she also knew children’s songs, comic songs, and such poetic lyrics as “The Girl I Left Behind Me”, “Green Grows the Laurel” and “The Lovely Irish Maid”. The other ballads that she sang included “Fair Marjorie’s Ghost” (Child # 74 “Fair Margaret and Sweet William”), “Johnny of Hazelgreen” (Child # 293), “The Rosy Banks of Green” and “The Soldier Maid”.

Although Peacock returned to the Northern Peninsula in 1959 and spent considerable time there, he also explored the feasibility of collecting in the south-west corner of Newfoundland. This meant, in particular, Cape St. George in the Port au Port Peninsula, Bay St. George, several communities in the Codroy Valley (located further down the west coast) and a group of outports on the South West Coast, east of Port aux Basques. At Cape St. George he found a

group of francophone singers: Mme Arthur Félix, Joseph Lemoine, Mme Joséphine March, Jean Ozon, and Cornelius, Cyril and Guillaume Robin. Of these, Joseph Lemoine, who specialized in sailor songs, was the most prolific informant. But in terms of quantity Peacock’s harvest of francophone material at Cape St. George was nothing compared to what he would find further down the coast.

At Loretto on Bay St. George, Peacock discovered Mme Joséphine Costard, the size of whose repertoire rivaled that of Charlotte Decker and Freeman Bennett. During the three-year period 1959-61 Peacock obtained 29 French songs from Mme Costard, including such ballads of tragic love as “Flambeau d’amour” and such love lyrics as “Ma petite Marguarite” and “La jolie fille et ses deux amants”. She also had comic songs (“Le bon vin”), laments (“La plainte du capitaine”), and war songs (“Les clairons sonnaient la charge”). Joséphine Costard was clearly one of Peacock’s best informants, and I regret that space does not permit me to explore here the wealth of material with which she and other francophone singers from neighbouring communities provided him.



Mme Joséphine Costard of Loretto (photo K. Peacock)

The Bloody Garden

'Tis of a beau-ty fair, oh a shep-herd's daugh-ter dear, She was
 cour-ted by her own true heart's de-light; She
 was a vir-gin bright, oh his joy and heart's de-
 light, Oh and nothing but death could this young cou-ple part.

'Tis of a beauty fair, oh a shepherd's daughter dear,
 She was courted by her own true heart's delight,
 She was a virgin bright, oh his joy and heart's delight,
 Oh and nothing but death could this young couple part.

His mother false and cruel wrote a letter to his jewel,
 And she wrote it in a hand just like his own,
 Saying, "Meet me here tonight, meet me my heart's delight,
 In the garden gay near my mother's home."

The gardener agreed, oh with fifty pounds indeed,
 To kill this girl and lay her in the ground,
 And with flowers fine and gay, oh her grave to overlay,
 That way her virgin body ne'er shall be found.

This fair one she arose and to the garden goes,
 All for to meet her own true heart's delight,
 Where she searched the groves all round, oh but no true love she found,
 Till at length the bloody gardener came in sight.

"Oh madame, now I pray, what brought you here this way,
 Are you going to rob me of my garden gay?"
 "No," she said, "no thief I am, I'm in search of a young man
 Who has promised to meet me here this way."

"Prepare, prepare," he cries, "prepare to lose your life,
 Your virgin body bleeding in the ground,
 And with flowers fine and gay your grave I'll overlay,
 That way your virgin body ne'er could be found."

She on the ground did fall, oh and to the Lord did call,

Saying, "Oh false cruel love, is this your design?"
"No, his mother false and cruel has betrayed you and your jewel,
And has paid me well to make your heart all mine."

With that he drew a knife, cut the single thread of life,
Lay her virgin body bleeding on the ground;
And with flowers fine and gay, oh her grave did overlay,
That way her virgin body ne'er could be found.

This young man he arose and to the garden goes
All for to meet his own true heart's delight,
Where he searched the grove all round, oh but no true love he found
Till the grove and the valleys seemed to mourn.

Then he lay down to sleep on a mossy bank so sweet,
Where a milk-white dove flew swiftly o'er his head;
With her battering wings did beat all about this young man's feet
And when he awoke the dove she had fled.

The dove away did flee and perched on a myrtle tree,
This young man followed her through the garden gay,
He called her soft and low with his heart so full of woe,
Till he came to the place where the dove did lay.

He said, "My pretty dove, so mournful there above,
Have you lost your own true love as I have mine?"
Down from the tree so tall, oh she on the ground did fall,
Where she drooped her neck, spread her wings, and bled from the breast.

This young man home did go with his heart so full of woe,
Saying, "Oh false cruel mother, you have me undone,
Robbed me of my beauty bright, oh my joy and heart's delight,
And 'tis soon now you shall have no heir and son."

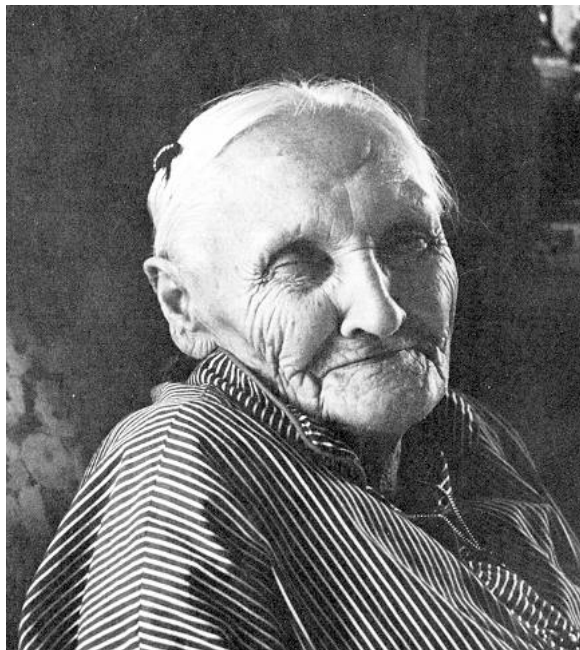
With that he drew a knife, cut the single thread of life
In the bloody garden where his true love lay,
"Oh my virgin beauty bright, oh my joy and heart's delight,
Soon we both shall meet all in the garden gay."

When Peacock returned to the Bay St. George area in 1960 he also collected a dozen English-language items from Leonard Hulan of Jeffrey's. Hulan's songs included "Ferryland Sealer", "The Banks of the Penmanah" (a variant of the American ballad "Banks of Pontchartrain") and "Bury Me Not in the Deep, Deep Sea", a local adaptation of the cowboy lament "Bury Me Not On the Lone Prairie".

The communities that Peacock visited in the Codroy Valley were located on the south-western tip of Newfoundland, at the mouth of the Grand Codroy River. They included Searston, Upper Ferry, Doyles, and Codroy itself. Several of his informants in this area were francophone: Mme Lucie Cormier, Martin Deveau, and Mme Gale. The singer who had the most material, however, was Mrs. Mary Ann Galpin of Codroy, whom he discovered in 1960 and who was

his oldest Newfoundland informant. Among the traditional ballads she contributed were "The Two Brothers" (Child # 49), "Lady Margaret" (Child # 77 "Sweet William's Ghost"), and "The Young Ship's Carpenter" (Child # 243 "The Daemon Lover"). Her broadside ballads included "Jimmy and Nancy", "The Female Smuggler", "The Handsome Cabin Boy", and "The Pretty Ploughboy". She provided Peacock with a rare sea-song about a mutiny at sea ("The Saladin Mutiny"), and with one of the most sadistic of all murder ballads, "The Ordeal of Andrew Rose". Her Irish lyrics included "Charming Sally Greer", "Alone on the Shamrock Shore", and "The Maid of Sweet Gartheen". She also knew a fine version of one of the most popular Canadian ballads of the supernatural, "Jimmy Whelan", and two tragic sea-ballads, "The Loss of the 'Atlantic'" and "The Loss of the 'Quebec

City”’. Regrettably, only one of her performances (“The Pretty Ploughboy”) is included on the CD-ROM as a full-length audio-file.



Mrs. Mary Ann Galpin of Codroy (photo Kenneth Peacock)

One of the most interesting local songs recorded by Peacock in the Codroy Valley was “The River Driver’s Lament”, which he obtained from John T. O’Quinn of Searston. Searston was also the home of Joseph Bruce, who contributed the love lyric “Blooming Mary Jane”, while Alan MacArthur of Upper Ferry was the source not only of two sailor songs, “The Ghostly Sailors” and “The Banks of Newfoundland”, but also of three Gaelic items.

As mentioned, Peacock split his available collecting time in 1959 and the next year between Bay St. George, the Codroy Valley, and a third area, the South West Coast between Port aux Basques and Rose Blanche. At Isle aux Morts he found Mrs. Wallace Kinslow, from whom he collected fourteen songs, including the love ballads “Annie Franklin”, “Barbr’y Ellen” (Child # 84), and “Lovely Nancy”. She also sang two local narrative songs about tragedies at sea, “The Loss of the ‘Jubal Cain’” and “The ‘Union’ from St. John’s”. The two songs of Mrs. Kinslow’s that Peacock most admired were her version of “Died for Love” (her title was “She Died in Love”) and “She’s Like the Swallow”, for which she had several more verses than those noted by Maud Karpeles some thirty years earlier.

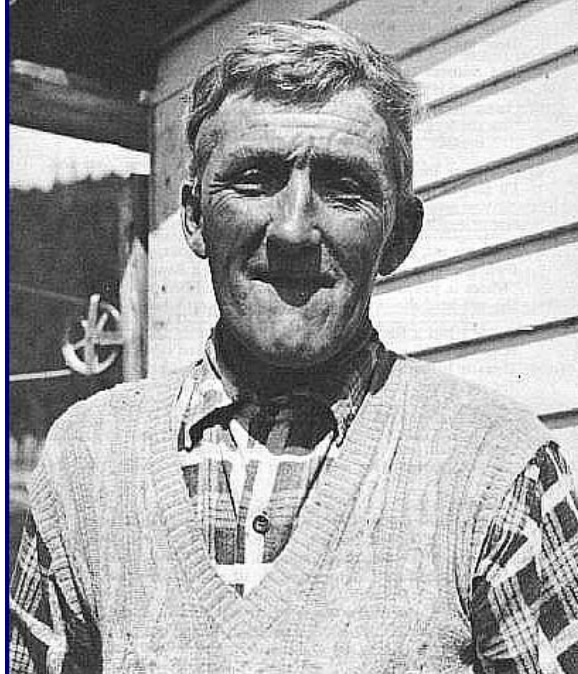


Kenneth Peacock recording Mrs. Wallace Kinslow at Isle aux Morts (Peacock Collection)

At nearby Rose Blanche Peacock discovered another valuable informant, Kenneth Pink, a younger singer whose repertoire included the love lyrics “Nancy from London” and “Blooming Mary Ann” and such comic songs as “The Moonshine Can” and “Tom Bird’s Dog”. Evidently a fisherman, Mr. Pink also sang two fishing songs (“Labrador” and “Taking Back Gear in the Night”) and tragic ballads about the loss of three boats, the *Barbara Ann Ronney*, the *Danny Goodwin*, and the *John Harvey*. Other outports along the South West Coast where Peacock found local singers were Mouse Island and Burnt Islands. The latter community was the home of, among other singers, Jim Keeping, who offered three songs: “The Sweet Mossy Banks of the Wey”, “The Worcester Tragedy” (a version of the murder ballad also known as “The Wexford Tragedy” or “The Oxford Girl”), and another interesting version of “The Unquiet Grave” (Child # 78).

Peacock made one other significant trip in 1960, to Seal Cove in White Bay, on the northern coast of Newfoundland. This was a long way from his normal hunting grounds, so it is not clear why he suddenly chose to visit this particular remote outport. Perhaps he had received a tip that there was a singer there whom he should on no account neglect to record. The singer was Joshua Osborne, and he was certainly well worth the lengthy journey. Peacock recorded 15 songs from him. They included a fragment of “The Cruel Mother” (Child # 20), a much more complete version of “The Bonny Banks of Airdrie O” (Child # 14 “Babylon”), and such broadside ballads as “The Ship’s Carpenter”, “The Sea Ghost”, “The Bold Trooper” and “A Paper of Pins” (aka “The Keys of My Heart”). Osborne also knew comic ditties, children’s songs and fishing songs, as well as several lo-

cally-composed ballads about shipwrecks, such as “The Newfoundland Tragedy” and “The Loss of the ‘Atlantic’”.



Joshua Osborne of Seal Cove, White Bay (photo Peacock)

Peacock’s last major collecting trip to Newfoundland was in 1961. He went back to such favourite informants as Mme. Joséphine Costard at Loretto on Bay St. George, Mrs. Mary Ann Galpin in the Codroy Valley, Mrs. Annie Walters in Rocky Harbour, and Howard Morry at Ferryland on the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula. He also visited a few new communities, such as Aquaforte and Fermeuse on the Southern Shore and Branch on St. Mary’s Bay.

At Aquaforte Peacock found Peter Ryan, and although he only collected two songs from him, one of them was a very lengthy traditional ballad, “Sir James the Rose” (Child # 213). At Fermeuse Peacock made his last major discovery. Here he found Patrick Rossiter, a singer whose decorated style owed a great deal to his Irish heritage. This informant gave him ten songs, most of them ballads. One, “Young Sally Monro”, was clearly Irish, but most of the others were Newfoundland creations, including “A Crowd of Bold Shareman”, “George’s Banks”, “The Fisher Who Died in his Bed”, “Old Grandma Hones”, “The Riverhead Launching on Jubilee Day” and “The Loss of the ‘Eliza’”. Patrick Rossiter was clearly a valuable source of home-grown Newfoundland song.

Peacock had noted his first Newfoundland song from an inhabitant of Branch, so it was fitting that he finally made it to that community on St. Mary’s Bay in 1961. At Branch he found Gerald Campbell, who sang him a local railway-construction song, “The Track to Knob Lake”. He also discovered the Nash family—Andrew, Patrick, and William—and from them recorded two Irish love-songs, “The Slaney Side” and “The Irish Colleen”, two Child ballads, “Barbary Ellen” (Child # 84) and “The Farmer’s Curst Wife” (Child # 278), and two popular local songs, “The Maid of Newfoundland” and “The Emigrant from Newfoundland”. The combination of English, Irish, and home-grown song traditions was typical of the mixture of song-cultures that Peacock had found during his six summers of field-collecting in Newfoundland.

This brings us to the end of our short journey through time and place, following Kenneth Peacock’s travels in Newfoundland during 1951-52 and 1958-61. For anyone who has only a glancing acquaintance with the print edition of *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports* and for those who are unfamiliar with this landmark in the recovery of Canadian traditional song, I hope that I have persuaded you that the CD-ROM is an essential acquisition. It is not perfect, but it makes accessible again one of the finest of all Canadian folksong collections, with the added bonus of providing a taste of the singing styles of many of Peacock’s informants.

Notes

¹ Kenneth Peacock, ed. *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*, 3 volumes (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1965).

² For example, the Athabasca University Library was able to obtain only one volume at an affordable price.

³ “About”, in Jim Payne & Don Walsh, eds. *Kenneth Peacock’s Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*, CD-ROM (St. John’s, NF: Singsong Inc, 2006).

⁴ Anna Guigné, “Kenneth Peacock’s Bio” in “About”, *loc. cit.*

⁵ Guigné, “Kenneth Peacock’s Bio”, *loc. cit.*

⁶ Kenneth Peacock, note to “Oh Write Me Down, Ye Powers Above”.