

The Power of Song as the Voice of the People

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There are few political speeches that effectively match the power of a song in keeping alive issues of social justice or freedom. In the seventeenth century, Scottish politician Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun proclaimed: ‘If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation.’ⁱ As in Fletcher’s day, there is no telling if a song of protest will bring about change – nevertheless, it is still the most powerful tool to give voice to those with enough conviction to take a stand. Of equal importance, songs are our most harmonious and peaceful ‘weapons’, effective outside the context of conflict as well as on the picket line or demonstration.

It was in the spirit of taking a stand that Festival 500 was ‘purposely conceived and initiated in response to the threat to Newfoundland’s culture by the enforced closure of the cod fishery in 1992.’ As every Newfoundlander knows, ‘[the cod] fishery was not only a mainstay of the province’s economy, but the *raison d’être* for European settlement. In fact, it was the social and economic engine of our society. Its closure was a devastation to our society...’ And in ‘Newfoundland and Labrador, [singing] has historically been an integral part of community life – a way of celebrating, mourning, documenting events, telling the stories.’

In 1968, when I first arrived in Newfoundland as a student, I felt instantly at home to find that singing had a part in every occasion, be it in kitchen, the student common room, or anywhere else. Since my upbringing in the Hebrides of Scotland had so many parallels and similarities, I assumed this was how the whole world lived – music and songs were woven into the pattern of everyday life. The songs discussed in this paper are all from fieldwork recordings of Jerome Downey, a Newfoundland-Irish singer who was born in 1924 in the Codroy Valley on the west coast.ⁱⁱ As the original paper was illustrated by recordings of Jerome’s singing, all examples are available on-line via the website of Grace Note Publications.ⁱⁱⁱ

In discussing the power of song as the voice of the people, this paper deals with folksong, in the broadest sense of the term: songs made by and sung by ordinary people, during their everyday lives and leisure. In his community, Jerome Downey is known for his melodic voice and ability to entertain. Like his father and grandfather before him, he made his living as a woodsman, hunter and farmer. Throughout life, singing has been Jerome’s most effective means of communicating, whether by his own kitchen stove or in a packed auditorium, church or hall. Though he never sought to make a name for himself in the world of music, Jerome could scarcely imagine life without the freedom to sing: ‘The greatest thing in the world, you know, is music. Oh heavens yes! I wouldn’t be able to live without it! If the Lord made anything any better He kept it to Himself!’

Jerome had an impressive repertoire that ranged across classic ‘Child’ ballads, broadsides, music-hall songs, sacred songs, Country and Western songs heard on the radio and ones he called ‘concert songs learned at school’, several ‘old Newfoundland favourites’ as well as compositions by local song-makers in the Codroy Valley. He had an enviable skill in choosing a ‘set list’ that would not only keep listeners engaged but also make them sit up and take notice, or even feel uneasy, about issues that concerned them or any Newfoundlander. A man of few words, Jerome’s songs reflected his strong identity with his community, his values of fairness and justice as well as his infectious sense of humour.

As a singer, Jerome carries on the ancient custom of ‘the old country’, where bards and minstrels gave voice to ordinary people. This practice is not confined to Ireland or Scotland, but is rooted in pan-European tradition as 18th century German poet Goethe^{iv} wrote: ‘The unsophisticated man is more the master of direct, effective expression in few words [and in songs] than he who has received a regular literary education.’ And, having listened to singers across Europe, Countess Martinengo-Cesares concluded that ‘the very heart of a people is laid bare in its sagas and songs... Laws may be imposed on the unwilling, but not songs.’^v

As in earlier centuries, so also in the present day, as is evidenced by the folksong collection amassed in Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore Archive, founded in 1968 and now one of the largest in the English-speaking world. When its founder, Herbert Halpert, began collecting songs, he was acutely aware that earlier collectors in Newfoundland (particularly Maud Karpeles) favoured classic ballads over locally compositions. Addressing the International Folk Music Council in London in 1950, Halpert urged that folklorists to push the boundaries of song scholarship beyond classic ballads:

... the local song is much more significant for understanding the function of folk song in a community than is an infrequently sung or little known older ballad, no matter how much more satisfying the rare ballad may be to our aesthetic sensibilities, or our egos.... If singers do not make up new songs or manipulate the old materials, we have one indication that the singing tradition in that area has become fossilized.^{vi}

Sixty years on, there nothing fossilized about song-making traditions in Newfoundland and for every singer-song-writer well known outside of Canada, there are many whose names have never been know. Yet all of them bear a genuine Newfoundland stamp on their music. Just like the bards of Europe, Newfoundland song-makers have taken up the mantle, and in their songs have kept alive causes such as the cod fishery or seal hunt. As new songs continue to address social, moral and political concerns, they give voice to their own people, who, even in a democracy, have no platform to express opinion.

The same is also true in most democracies: It is not the rulers or politicians who lead folk to sing for civil rights – it is the song-makers and singers of the world. It is America’s Woody Guthrie, Mahalia Jackson, Pete Seeger, Joan Baez or Tom Paxton; it is Cape Breton’s Rita MacNeil, Newfoundland’s Ron Hynes, Ireland’s Tommy Sands, Scotland’s Hamish Henderson. It is the singers, not politicians, who raise their voices for justice and freedom, and who keep singing when nobody is allowed to speak.

In the Codroy Valley, for as far back as anyone remembers, songs have been sung in three (and at times four) languages as settlers were a mix of Irish, Scottish Gaels, French, English and Mi’kmaq. Their history goes back over two centuries and it is worth remembering that, until 1949, Canada was another country. Anyone born before that year, is, first and foremost, a Newfoundlander, belonging to a unique island with a long history – it may have the distinction of being Britain’s oldest colony and Canada’s newest province, yet, when I first visited it was very common to hear folk explain, ‘I’m not a Canadian, I’m a Newfoundlander.’

Jerome Downey was of the generation of young men and women who were in the prime of life when Newfoundland joined confederation in 1949. They were the last generation to have been seen adulthood as ‘Newfoundlanders born and bred’, and the first of a generation to raise children who would be Canadians. They weathered the changing political climate, the squalls and the moments of calm that led to Confederation and they listened on their relatively new

Radios to the election speeches – if you didn't have one in your house, you could walk into the neighbour's kitchen and listen. And, as the main candidate had his own radio show, they knew that voice, though not everyone hung on every word uttered. Among the dissenters was Codroy Valley song-maker Hughie O'Quinn, who composed his 'Anti-Confederation Song' to address some of the issues of the day. His ultimate aim is to fire a squib at the main political figure, Joseph R. Smallwood, known as 'Joey'. Sung to the well-known tune 'The Girl I Left Behind Me' the song is rooted in the Codroy Valley, and though the full text is 52 lines long, a shorter example will illustrate his style. In line 2 he refers to a Gaelic song, *Fhir a Bhàta*, which was (and is) popular in the area.

I'm lonesome since in 'Thirty-two
we lost Dominion status,
No longer can I summon strength
to sing '*O Fhir a' Bhàta*'.
A foreign gang came over here
to rule and gather taxes,
While natives toiled to till the soil,
or labour with pick-axes.
No fun or frolic do I crave,
my heart it is a-bleeding,
Since we our heritage have lost
and others us are leading.

Now, by the way, the experts say,
our country's self-supporting,
Joe Smallwood hopped the west-bound sleigh
the Maple leaf a-courting.
Oh shall we wed the great Confed?
Or shall we court the Yankee?
Or shall we bide at Mama's side
and use the self-same hankie?

....

And now my news is running out,
and gee! I feel like dancing.
I hear Joe Smallwood's got the gout
and he must quit romancing!
So clear the floor and let her roar,
for joy that almost blinds me,
We'll sing and dance to the merry strains
of 'The Girl I Left Behind Me'!

Six decades on, Jerome sang 'The Anti-Confederation Song' recounting details that may otherwise have been long forgotten.^{vii} There can be no doubt that political songs possess an enviable power to keep alive issues which may have first come to light through a newspaper headline, a radio broadcast or a fiery political speech. From newscast to newscast one crisis

seems to fizzle out as soon as the next one emerges; but if it becomes the subject of a song, even small details may be remembered for years, even centuries.

The tradition is an ancient one, embedded in very psyche of the people who settled in Newfoundland – it reflects the bardic outpourings of Ireland, Scotland, England and France, ranging across topics that include heroes, villains, victories, defeats, atrocities, acts of kindness, indiscretions, hilarity, love, sex, indiscretion, and hypocrisy.

Historically, the bard has had an honorable position in society, exemplified in Ireland and Scotland by the bardic lineage of centuries. As well as commanding respect, bards exercised social control to the point that people feared lest any indiscretion be publicly revealed in song. Nobody was safe from the bard, not even other bards who, on one occasion might be delighted and amused by a fellow wordsmith, then, without warning, they may be tested and tried by the same one.^{viii} Even clan chiefs were wary of the bards and some even believed that they could become ill, or might break out in boils, as the result of a satire.^{ix} In the context of the modern world, this fear is still worth heeding as psychologically induced illness is nothing new – anyone might feel sick if they were scandalized in their own community or on a public platform.

In Scotland, as far back as 1695, Martin Martin from the Isle of Skye (writing in English) noted in that the Gaels have a ‘gift of poesy’ and an ability ‘to form a satire’.^x Nearly a century later, the Rev. John Lane Buchanan, a Gaelic-speaking minister whose parish was in the Outer Hebrides observed that, ‘One may meet, not only with studied, but even extemporaneous effusions of the most acute and pointed satire, that pierce to the heart, and leave a poignant sting.’^{xi}

The real sting or ‘bite’ in the satire does not come from a wishy-washy portrayal of the subject, but from the dramatic or sharpened emphasis of key issues. This may be somewhat akin to caricature, where certain features are singled out by the artist and exaggerated, sometimes outrageously, with the aim of shocking observers into paying attention, so the satire can also take the listener aback. Scottish folklorist Alan Bruford described satire as the ‘stock-in-trade of most local bards ... and satire without truth or clarity cannot bite... they show much more of society than the eulogies of earlier bards.’^{xii}

In every community, no matter how small, there will always be controversial or moral issues that need to be addressed, yet few of those who tut-tut in private will be willing to take a stand in public. Thus, the bardic tradition continues, as one of the most effective means of dealing with subjects such as unconventional or scandalous behavior is to compose a satire and sing it within the community – on the surface it may be light-hearted, or funny but there is usually a sharp edge that makes someone uncomfortable. All of the local songs Jerome sang fell into this category, some more serious than others.

The Codroy Valley song-makers who either gave, or sang their songs to Jerome, knowing he would sing them, were personal friends. The eldest was a neighbor, a bachelor, Paul E. Hall (1897–1973), was the composer of a song that may already be known to folklorists through the work of ethnomusicologist John Szwed: ‘Paul E. Hall: A Newfoundland Song-Maker and his Community of Song’.^{xiii} Though the essay regularly appears on ‘required reading lists’ for students, hitherto there has been no available audio-recording of the song until Jerome recorded it. Of the 23 verses he sings, the following excerpt will illustrate Paul’s take on his subject, beginning with a description of his house followed by his experience of bachelorhood. On the one hand the song-maker praises bachelorhood and satirized women, while on the other hand regrets the absence of a wife and satirizes himself.^{xiv}

1

There is a house upon a hill
That is a bachelor's hall
And the bachelor that lives in it
His name is Paulie Hall.

To my tippy-tippy-tippy tip-top, tip-top, tip-top
Tippy-tippy-tip-top tay.

5

I have no wife to bother me,
Or to spend on paint and rouge.
So you see I have some extra
When I want to have a booze.

8

Next morning when I get up
My head is mighty bad,
And I hear no woman scolding,
You bet I feel some glad!

10

I wish I knew some nice young lass
To love and carry home
Sure I'm getting mighty tired
Of this living all alone.

18

I'll stay around at Journois Brook
For one week and a day,
Sure, and if I haven't got one
Then I'll go on to Flat Bay.

Paul was woodsman and farmer of English extraction, and when I visited him in 1970 he described how composed: he'd be out in the woods working, alone with his thoughts, and a song would come to him. By the end of the day when he and his horse returned, he would be able to sing the entire song. There was nothing unusual about being able to retain lines of text without the aid of a pen, though he was pleased to make sure his songs would be written out afterwards.

Among his friends and neighbours there was a keen awareness that you had to be discreet, especially in courtship, or Paul would make a song about you. It might also be unwise to say anything about Paul that could possibly cause offence, as a fellow bard discovered months after composing a funny, uncomplimentary ditty about Paul's horse. Pay-back time came when Micky Jim MacNeil had a serious accident and almost drowned trying to cross the frozen Codroy River. Paul's song was so scurrilous that today it might be considered libelous. Entitled 'Micky Jim MacNeil', the song begins by praising for his good Scotch neighbours:

Oh, I worked up in Scotchytown,
I liked my work and master fine,
We usually make hay
when the sun so bright do shine.
We usually went to it
till the sun you couldn't see –
I like them old-time Scotchmen,
for they make the good strong tea.

The benevolent attitude does not last, however, as in Verse 4 the song turns sour and becomes a scathing satire. The spotlight is on Micky, at whom he fires insults that include a suggestion that Micky is riddled with fleas. Finally, in verse 9, which has the style of a 'come-all-ye', Paul concludes in admonitory tone, while acquitting Micky of a criminal attempt to drown his 'bosom friends' (the fleas):

Come, Micky, pay attention,
and voice to you I'll send,
What worse crime did you e'er commit
than to drown your bosom friend?
When you're walking on the ice,
oh don't you be so bold,
Remember that in wintertime
the water it is cold!

In Paul's day, however, neither the phrase nor the concept of 'political correctness' had been invented.

Micky Jim MacNeil (1901–1948), son of one of the first Scottish Highland immigrants, was a Gaelic-speaker, who composed songs and poems in English.^{xv} As he died in 1948, those who never met him might gain a very poor impression of him through Paul Hall's song. When Jerome sang any of MacNeil's songs, however, even fifty years after he had died the very mention of his name, seemed to light up the company. Among the older generation there would be remarks, such as this one by a neighbour, Mary MacIsaac: 'Micky Jim! Oh, I remember Micky – and was he ever funny! He could take off [mimic] anybody and make songs. Oh he was funny! And he lived down on this side of the MacArthurs' there. And songs...'^{xvi}

People who knew Micky described him as mild-mannered, generous to everyone, Uncle Micky to many, great fun, yet, of the three song-makers, MacNeil may be the only one to find that his songs landed him in trouble. At the age of 24 he dashed off a song called 'The Five Boss Highway', satirizing the set-up among road workers who, in the 1920s had begun to carve out what was eventually to be the Trans-Canada Highway, completed in 1966:

Come all you boys from Codroy Valley who chance for to roam,
In search of employment go up on the road,
The Five Boss Highway, I'll give it full name,
I don't think I'm wrong, boys, for saying the same.

Though composed over eighty years ago, there is a timelessness about Micky's observations (more bosses than men) as he concludes his song with verse 12:

My song is now ended, I can't sing no more,
My tongue's getting tired, my throat's getting sore,
I hope you will take this all as a joke,
But it's no bloomin' wonder our government's broke.

In its day, however, the song did not go over well, especially with the boss, so when Micky asked for a job he was refused. Jerome laughingly added, 'So Micky went home and he composed another song! He called that one 'Employment Song'.' Though Jerome knew Micky and had enjoyed his company on many occasions, it is worth noting that these particular songs were composed when Jerome was only an infant:

As I left home one morning employment for to find,
I thought I'd go and see the crowd upon the highway line,
Thinking I would be welcome as others of my kind
But when I heard them speaking I had to change my mind.

The only that I could hear as I went along
'Is that the young rascal composed the famous song?'
Then I went to the manager, these words to him did say:
'Shall I be numbered with the men that's hired here today?'

He pulled his shovel from the mud and stared at me in the face,
I didn't think a poet would work in such a dreadful place....^{xvii}

For the rest of the ten-verse song, Micky (in true tradition) satirizes himself, and accepts responsibility for his earlier protest. Eighty years on, thanks to Jerome, the songs continue to spark off discussion or amusing anecdotes, which, in turn, become part of the 'glue' that holds a community together. People remember what it was like before that highway... or electricity... or supermarkets. And Jerome, who kept those road-working song alive, could still raise a smile, not only from men with experience of construction work but also from anyone who has ever seen a road-man lean on a shovel.

The third song-maker was Hughie O'Quinn (1905 – 1986), not Irish, as might be imagined, but of French origin – Au Coin, Hibernicized to O'Quinn by the Irish priest who spoke Scottish Gaelic but not French. Nevertheless, of the three song-makers, Hughie's style of composition had most in common with Irish satirical song, as he spent several years in Ireland while a young man. All of his songs were composed to popular Irish airs, which, as often as not created a subtext to his message. For example, his 'Sealer's Song' which he composed to the tune of an Irish rebel song, after an incident close to the mouth of the Grand Codroy River. Unusually, seals had appeared on the ice close to the shore and several local men got into difficulty when they attempted to hunt them. As Jerome explained:

They weren't sealers, they were just landsmen and a lot of them fell in And two or three almost lost their lives but they all got ashore. And this Jim Hynes, he's in the song, said, 'Hughie, you should make a song.' And the next morning Hughie handed in the song...^{xviii}

While Hughie O'Quinn's composition is also light-hearted, it has the stamp of the satirist on it, as he makes playful jest of the sealers and their ploys before firing a powerful rocket at the controversy surrounding the hunt. The song is instantly identifiable as local (Codroy River Bight), and the style is reminiscent of an Irish 'come-all-ye', with its anticipated 'take warning by me' advice follows an amusing, if unfortunate, incident:

On We'n'sday night, March seventeen, our spirits mounted high
For rumour reached our Valley that the seals were passing by.
It caused a great sensation for it is a wondrous sight
To see those little puppy seals in Codroy River Bight.

Some husky men from all around, from Broad Cove to Anguille
Made ready and were outward bound in hopes to make a kill.
Our bat and sheath-knife we must grip, our creepers we must file
For it doesn't pay to make a slip when running down a swile.^{xix}

The twelve-verse song unfolds the misadventure, naming names, make fun of them, which, in the tradition is acceptable provided the only hurt inflicted is to personal pride, and not to body or soul. It is the choice of tune however – 'The Wearing of the Green'^{xx} – that exposed O'Quinn's real purpose: to draw attention to the political rumblings that were erupting at the time. With the skill of the satirist he succeeds, waiting till verses 11 and 12 before considering the extent to which some people will go to test the law. He poses a string of questions, which, to the fisherman or hunter, may be so absurd that they scarcely merit response. On their behalf, O'Quinn fires the final, well crafted and accurately aimed:

I'm sure some day a demagogue will write up in a book
The proper way to stun a cod before he takes the hook.

As O'Quinn senses the legal folly that is about to affect Newfoundland's entire population he protests in song. His message is as relevant today as it was then:
When the letter of the law triumphs over feeding the hungry, then logic is turned on its head. Meanwhile the fisherman is left to consider the ludicrous proposal—picture this—of doing everything backwards: bait the hooks, cast the lines, land the catch, stun the fish, remove the hooks—in reverse order. A demonstration is called for, in both senses of the word.

For Jerome, his community and his beloved Newfoundland, the song took on a greater significance – the decades that followed saw the banning of the centuries old tradition of the seal-fishery, the ensuing destruction of the codfish and the disastrous consequences that effectively put 30,000 Newfoundlanders on the dole. And, as every Newfoundlander knows, it was the cod fishery that first drew folk to settle in Newfoundland –the Irish called it *Talamh an Eisg* – land of the codfish. It also became the land of the songs, sharing with the homeland tunes and themes that have endured longer than the fishing

In the politically correct twenty-first century, satirical song-making is alive and well in the Old Country, as Fintan Valleley demonstrates in his collection, *Sing Up! Irish Comic Songs & Satires for Every Occasion*.^{xxi} A master at the craft himself, Valleley appropriately introduces the book as a ‘Gather-up of intolerance, irreverence, slagging and sedition’ inspired by an experiment in 1987 ‘on the natives of Scotland [when he and Tim Lloyd performed a concert] of send-ups and other ephemera.’ Topics covered include those touched on, or tackled by, Paul E. Hall, Micky Jim MacNeil and Hughie O’Quinn – politics, courtship, employment, pretentiousness, animal rights, hypocrisy – with the culture of the day underlying the themes. There are also similarities in the style of composition (particularly in those by O’Quinn and MacNeil), as Valleley notes that ‘the verses are in the mould [sic] of both the 19th century seditious ballad and the music-hall skit. Moral judgment masquerades as wit in the best tradition of lightening the load.’^{xxii}

Humour is a curious thing, for, unlike other universally experienced qualities such as happiness or sadness, what passes for humour in one place may not be recognized in another. In general, however, the Irish and the Scots share an ability to laugh at themselves, particularly through hard times.

Jerome had a masterful sense of dynamics when it came to choosing the right song for the moment or a concert set-list. His more serious subjects were certainly aimed to make folk stop and think, but never a cue to plunge into despair. In an instant he would break into some sort of hilarity, such as ‘Pat Malone Forgot that he was Dead’, which would reduce the whole company to laughter and ease the tension of protest. As this ten-verse song demonstrates, the satirist can even laugh at death:

Things were dull in Irish town; everything was going down,
And Pat Malone was getting stuck for cash.
In life insurance he had spent all his money to a cent
And business with him it was going smash.

His wife Bridget to him said, ‘Pat, my dear, if you were dead,
All that hundred thousand dollars I would take.’
So Pat lay down and tried just to play off he had died
Until he smelled the whiskey at the wake...^{xxiii}

Through songs, we sense the character and spirit of those who sing them. While this paper discusses the power of singing as the voice of the people, it is as much a tribute to Newfoundland’s song-makers and singers who keep these songs alive. Without singers, the song may lie dormant on a page and the protest remain silent. For eight decades, Jerome sang, not only for the joy of singing, but also to keep alive the memories, traditions and concerns of his people. Through songs our history is remembered, our concerns are addressed. As an old Greek folk-singer explained to Countess Martinengo-Cesaresco in the 1880s, ‘I’ve made this story into a song so as not to forget it.’^{xxiv}

ⁱ The quotation from Andrew Fletcher (1655-1716) is carved in stone on the Scottish Parliament's Canongate Wall, Edinburgh. Fletcher was one of the greatest opponents to the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, and though he lost his cause, it was eventually won in 1999 when Scotland regained its own parliament.

ⁱⁱ I first got to know Jerome Downey in 1970, though the recordings selected here were made in 1980 during a collaboration with fellow-folklorist, the late Kenneth S. Goldstein. They are archived in Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, MUNFLA 80-134.

ⁱⁱⁱ Short examples can be heard (free) or downloads of complete songs may be obtained at: http://www.gracenotepublications.co.uk/books/item/jerome-just-one-more-song?category_id=1 Full texts and further notes are also published in *Jerome—Just One More Song! Local, Social and Political History in the Repertoire of a Newfoundland-Irish Singer*. The book has a 25 track CD of the songs, which can also be downloaded. (Bennett 2012) Hereafter cited *Jerome...*

^{iv} 1749–1832, Frankfurt; Goethe's poem 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' that was based upon a much earlier tale by the Greek poet Lucian. He also wrote 'the Tale of the Fox' and 'Faust' both based on tradition and in the twentieth century made into movies.

^v *Essays in the Study of Folk-Songs* by the Countess Evelyn Martinengo-Cesaresco. London (1895), p. xiv.

^{vi} Considering the fact that in his audience was none other than Maud Karpales, whose prime aim was to collect those classic ballads, Halpert's address was challenging, to say the least. Herbert Halpert, 'Vitality of Tradition and Local Songs' pp. 35-40 (JIFM 1951) p. 40. The article was later published in *Folklore: An Emerging Discipline: Selected Essays of Herbert Halpert* (2002), pp. 135–142

^{vii} For the full text and notes, see *Jerome...* pp. 67–70.

^{viii} Such were the dynamics between two of the song-makers who gave songs to Jerome; see *Jerome...*, pp. 145–46.

^{ix} It is well known among Scottish Gaels that some 'victims' were said to have broken out in boils after they had become the subject of a satire. Thomas A. McKean discusses the subject in, 'Tradition and Modernity: Gaelic Bards in the Twentieth Century' in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature*, (2006) pp. 130–141.

^x Martin Martin, *A Description of the Western Isles of Scotland circa 1695*, p. 13.

^{xi} John Lane Buchanan, *Travels in the Western Hebrides: from 1782 - 1790*, p. 80.

^{xii} Alan Bruford, Review of Ian Grimble's *The World of Rob Donn*. See *Tocher*, No. 35, p. 351. See also, *Oatmeal and the Catechism: Scottish Gaelic Settlers in Quebec*, p. 152.

^{xiii} See, Henry Glassie, Edward D. Ives, and John Szwed, *Folksongs and Their Makers*, Bowling Green, Ohio (1970), pp. 147–169.

^{xiv} Full text and notes see *Jerome...* pp. 71–76. While Szwed notes (p. 162) that 'the implications of the title are important,' in his article the song is discussed as 'The Bachelor's Song'.

^{xv} MacNeil was not the first to publicly protest in song or poem for, in 1904, when petitions for a telegraph office at Codroy had been ignored, the weekly newspaper, *The Western Star*, published a poem lashing out at the Premier of Newfoundland, Sir Robert Bond, warning him he would lose their vote if he did not act on their behalf. (From a newspaper clipping shown during fieldwork.)

^{xvi} Recorded in conversation with one of Jerome's contemporaries, Mary MacIsaac, at Upper Ferry. (2012)

^{xvii} For the complete text, see *Jerome...* pp. 100–102.

^{xviii} MUNFLA 88-226

^{xix} A 'swile' is a seal. *The Dictionary of Newfoundland English* includes examples of usages, dating back to the 1600s.

^{xx} To anyone familiar with the words of the song, even the tune evokes protest, as it dates back to the 1798 Irish Rebellion when there was outrage at the banning of symbols such as the shamrock, which displayed loyalty to Ireland. As the seal-hunt is part of Newfoundland's identity, we get the gist, even from one verse of the old song: 'Oh. Paddy dear and did you hear the news that's going round?/The shamrock is by law forbid to grow on Irish ground./St. Patrick's Day no more we'll keep, his colour can't be seen/ For they're hanging men and women for the wearing of the green.' And, lest the historical facts be doubted, in singing the song Dominic Behan summed up the situation as 'Another little trick of Mother England's, imprison a man for respecting his country's National Emblems. Dispossess him if he used the Irish form of his name. Hang him if he objected.' See *Ireland Sings*, note to song number 96.

^{xxi} Despite the title, the collection (2008) includes a few Scottish compositions by Glasgow's Adam McNaughtan and Ullapool's Andy Mitchell.

^{xxii} *Sing Up!* Preface, p. 9. Though tempted to change this to 'mold', it remains as printed, since I was among the 'natives' at that concert when Fintan makes no bones about dusting off the mould of the past.

^{xxiii} For the full text, notes and a copy of what may be the original sheet-music (a variant of the song), see *Jerome...* pp. 79–82

^{xxiv} *Essays in the Study of Folk-Song*, 1888.