

THE ULSTER-SCOTS LANGUAGE SOCIETY

10th April 2003. On Inch Island in County Donegal, Elizabeth McLeister interviews Bertie Bryce. Born in 1920, Bertie farmed all his days and is a well known storyteller and raconteur. Here, he recites a poem called 'Our Son', written by Reverend WF Marshall, 'The Bard of Tyrone'.

Please note that Bertie deviates very slightly from the original poem, although largely gets it right.

[00:00:00.00] He was only a cub, wide-eyed an shy
When he travelled across the sea,
But a sorry cub when he said goodbye
To the hills of Athenree.

[00:00:17.25] Trig an dacent he went away,
His fortune for to win,
In a good warm suit an a muffler gay,
An a wee round trunk o tin.

[00:00:28.24] But he landed back at the last Carmin Fair
In the grandest o Yankee clothes.
An his specs are such as the Yankees wear,
An the chat comes down his nose.

[00:00:42.14] An he's big an he's fat - though I mind him slim,
In a waistcoat white an smart.
But by heavens the luggage that he brought wi him
Made the füll of a donkey cart.

[00:00:58.15] His wife's fae Clare - she was raired in soot,
An she scrubbed a Yankee floor,
But she's nothin now frae head tae fut
But a jinglin jooilry store.

[00:01:12.29] Chains an bangles an things that shine,
Buckles across her toes,
Bi heavens, if thon woman was mine
I'd turn a ring in her nose.

[00:01:26.03] An she's a wummin who likes soft for to lie;
How can I sleep on a shelf?
How can I waash myself, she'd cry,
Except in a tub of delf?

[00:01:37.23] Soup she waants, coffee, bedad,
Liver an bacon an fish,
An salad's a thing that's just got to be had -
Kale cut up in a dish.

[00:01:52.03] So our son's at home, an under his skin
He's the self same lad tae see
As the boy who carried his trunk o tin
Down to Athenree.

[00:02:07.18] Sure, he left in turf, an he fetched a go
O wattèr the day he came,
But me wife an I, the two of us know
He'll niver be jaist the same.

[00:02:25.22] For, whut dae ye think? Thon man would chew
The bite that goes intil her mouth,
An a wee back room wud niver do
For the flipe that was raired in the South.

[00:02:35.26] So he's taken a house with a bath and a lawn
An marble clocks that strike,
And he motors to see us aff an on,
A kine of a stranger, like.

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