

Taking Apart "Tickle Cove Pond"¹

Philip Hiscock

Abstract: The song "tickle Cove Pond" was written by Bonavista Bay songmaker Mark Walker in the nineteenth century but achieved its greatest popularity in the twentieth, given momentum in the mid-century by Gerald S. Doyle's songbooks, and later by popular culture exposure. Nowadays, the song has certain meanings for listeners. This paper suggests they reflect contemporary beliefs and "imaginings" about Newfoundland's past. In an analysis situated in the song's history and Mark Walker's life, possible meanings are suggested.

In the past decade, one of the emergent symbols of Newfoundland heritage and current culture has been the name and the work of Mark Walker (1846-1924). He was a fisherman as a young man, but a wood worker most of his life: a carpenter, boat-builder and woodsman. More importantly he set songs rolling down the slope of vernacular tradition. This paper examines one of his songs in the context of his situated life, including his connections to the Devine family of poets and their nephew, Gerald S. Doyle, an important figure in the promulgation of certain songs as representatives of Newfoundland culture. I suggest that readings of the song vary according to readers, their own "communities of song" (Szwed's phrase, 1970), and their "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983). Today, as much as when it was written, it is a work of imagination.

Despite popular notions of folksong's anonymous authorship, Newfoundland and Labrador has a strong tradition of identifying its song-makers. Often, part of the performance of songs with known authors is to identify them, a custom that is parallel to the strong "trivia" or popular knowledge culture of Newfoundland, going back a century or more and having its most recent incarnation in the books of Art Rockwood in the 1990s. Both locally within Newfoundland's regions and nationally throughout the province, song-makers are popularly identified and valorised. (Newfoundland was a separate country until 1949, but I am using "nation" in its cultural rather than political sense.). In Walker's local region of Bonavista South, he had a reputation in the twentieth century that several other regional song-makers have had in the province: Peter

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Leonard in Placentia Bay, Chris Cobb in Fogo, and John Burke in St. John's (Narváez 1984: 250). With the exception of Burke, these regional song-makers had no great reputation outside their local areas; until recently, outside his region Walker's name was known mainly to a few literate enthusiasts of Newfoundland songs.

Mark Walker is better known to Newfoundlanders today than a generation ago, especially among enthusiasts of Newfoundland culture. He has risen, in the past decade, into the popular pantheon of symbolic or iconic song-makers – those with a Newfoundland-national reputation – in company with John Burke ("Kelligrews Soiree"), Art Scammell ("Squid-Jiggin Ground") and Otto Kelland ("Let Me Fish Off Cape St. Mary's"). This rise is mainly due to the new popularity of one of his songs, "Tickle Cove Pond," and its performance by some influential recording artists. To state, as I have, that he is an emergent symbol of Newfoundland culture, is mainly to say that his name nowadays gets mentioned when singers perform his songs on stage; previously his songs were mainly anonymous. As well, two of his songs have moved into the central canon of Newfoundland folk songs; they are more likely today to be sung publicly and recorded than twenty years ago. His song "Tickle Cove Pond" has become a reference point for artists: an author named his book for a line from the song, *The Hard and the Aisey* (Long 1998), and a film-maker did the same with her movie *When Ponds Freeze Over* which had in its soundtrack a recurrent musical theme based on the song's tune (Lewis 1998). The Newfoundland Pony Society assigns official registration and names to owners of examples of the breed; in 2002 the official name of one was "Kit" to honour the horse in the song.²

That Mark Walker's songs were mainly anonymous until fairly recently is underscored by the experience of Kelly Russell who, with Don Walsh, produced Ron Hynes's recording of "Tickle Cove Pond" in 1991. The liner notes to the CD, *Another Time*, say about the song that "the author is unknown." After the recording was issued, Russell found out who wrote the song (K. Russell 2002) and, a few years later, he published a booklet of musical notations from the record, now including Walker's name (K. Russell ca. 1995).

Mark Walker was born in 1846 in Tickle Cove, Bonavista Bay.³ This area is in what is known today as "Central Newfoundland" and most of his (Newfoundland) descendants live in the major Central Newfoundland town of Gander. However, when I refer to his "local" reputation and the "local" enthusiasts of his life and songs, I am referring specifically to a 25-mile stretch of the North side of the Bonavista Peninsula that reaches approximately from Lethbridge in the West to Stock Cove in the East. Traditionally this area is known as "Bonavista South," being the Southern part of Bonavista Bay.

² The pony's owner is Don Collins, Gambo. Information is from his cousin, Gary Lundrigan, pers. comm., 4 November 2002.

³ Information about Walker's life comes from family documents in the possession of his grandson, Mark Kelly, of Gander. Additional information comes from interviews with family members, and from E. James Long who has made a comprehensive historical search and Martha Warren who has worked through church and government records and local graveyards. Long's book *The Hard and the Aisey* (1998) is the best source of historical information about the Bonavista South area that includes Tickle Cove.

In the nineteenth century, the Labrador Fishery by Newfoundlanders was one of a small number of cash-generating activities available to outporters like Walker and his family (Cuff 1991, Murphy 1988). It also may have given Walker a relationship with an important literary family of Newfoundland. As a young man, probably in the mid-1860s, Walker worked on the Labrador, apparently for the Devine family who held the fishing rights to Fanny's Harbour (J. Pitt 1984). That harbour was the most northerly port used by Newfoundlanders fishing each summer (Browne 1909: 308-309). The Devine family, who operated Fanny's Harbour, was based in King's Cove, a short enough distance from Walker's home to walk in a morning or sail in an hour or two. In Walker's time, the Fanny's Harbour fishery was operated by John Devine, father of Maurice and P. K. Devine, two notable writers and song-makers. Each of these three Devines warranted an entry in the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Bown 1981; Gordon Murray 1981; J. Pitt 1981; see also Hiscock 1997a). The Devine sons were uncles of Gerald S. Doyle, also from King's Cove. This constellation of Newfoundland folk literature stars is significant, as I will show below.

Mark Walker married in 1873 in Coachman's Cove, a town in North-Central Newfoundland whose English-speaking population only recently had been growing, partly based on families from Tickle Cove and supplanting French fishing crews there (J. Pitt 1981). This was part of the French Shore of Newfoundland (where, by treaty, French fishing crews had shore rights and Newfoundlanders had restricted shore rights) and remained so until 1904 (Budden 1984). The English population were fishermen in summer and woodsmen in winter, very much as in his home shore area of Southern Bonavista Bay.

Walker brought his wife, Mary Downey, back to Bonavista Bay and the following spring he was granted land at Little Harbour in Sweet Bay. Known still as Walker's Land, it remains in the hands of his grandchildren Kelly. It was a large piece of ground, over twenty acres, and well-wooded.⁴ In 1874 Walker was on the books of a Bonavista merchant, selling "wharf sticks" and other large or long lumber to the merchant (Long 1998: 28). He remained in Sweet Bay until 1906 when he took his entire family, but for a young married daughter, to the United States. The daughter, Mary Margaret Kelly (1887-1963⁵) continued living in Sweet Bay until her husband James Kelly's death in the late 1950s, when she moved to Gander to live with one of her daughters.

In Bonavista South, Mark Walker has a reputation as a prolific song-maker. He could "make up a song digging potatoes," said Willie Joe Long, a man known for singing them.⁶ He could make a song "from a hole in the floor," wrote Captain John Russell, one of his acquaintances (1998: 73). But less than a dozen of his songs have survived the century since he left Newfoundland. His wit is remembered locally as biting.⁷ He falls into

⁴ His grant is dated 23 March 1874; Newfoundland lands registry vol. 2, folio 58.

⁵ Her headstone in the Sweet Bay cemetery says she was 80 at death in 1963, placing her birth in 1883. Her grandchildren place her birth in 1887.

⁶ Willie Joe Long of Open Hall, recorded by Anna Kearney Guigné, MUNFLA tape C9989/74-45. Long died in 1984 and is buried in the Sacred Heart Church cemetery, Open Hall. His son is E. James Long, the local historian.

⁷ Martin Dooley, Plate Cove, July 1972, recorded by Carmel Burton for T. Ryan, MUNFLA C1833 & C1834/72-261; Willie Joe Long, Open Hall, 1974, MUNFLA C9989/74-45.

the class of satiric song-makers to which Paul E. Hall, Joe Scott, and Larry Gorman belonged and which thrived in the late nineteenth century (Ives 1962; 1977:167-179). Gorman, of Prince Edward Island and Maine, was a very near contemporary of Walker's, having been born in 1846 and died in 1917 (Ives 1977: 12, 136). Likewise in that class of satirists were song-makers Lawrence Doyle (1847 - 1907), Joe Scott (1867-1918), and John Burke (1851 - 1930) (Ives 1971: 3, 15; 1970: 75; Mercer 1978; Hiscock in press). Like Gorman, Walker was a nineteenth century nomad – "the peripatetic philosopher" one of his contemporaries called him (Browne 1909: 308). In search of employment, he moved most of his adult life. He spent the last eighteen years of his life in Boston, Massachusetts – part of that time, until he was too old, working construction sites. Mark Walker died in Everett, Massachusetts in February 1924 and is buried in Holy Cross Cemetery, Malden, a city adjacent to Metropolitan Boston.

An enduring part of the popular lore of Newfoundland is taken up with the themes of transience and emigration. Walker's transience – perhaps willingness to move for work is a better way to describe it – makes him a representative Newfoundlander of his time and since. His transience was at least partly rooted in the traditional transhumance that is evident even in place names in his part of the province: several communities in the area began as seasonal homes for local people engaged in the varieties of economic activity needed at different times of year (Smith 1987; 1987b; 1994).⁸

About a dozen songs are attributed to Walker; they are listed below. (Full annotations are given in the Appendix.)

1. "The Antis of Plate Cove."
2. "Fanny's Harbour Bawn."
3. "Lovely Kitty-Oh" (also known as "Lovely Katie-Oh").
4. "The Race on Tickle Cove Pond."
5. "Labrador Squalls."
6. "Down By Jim Long's Stage."
7. "The Girls From Sweet Bay."
8. "Nellie Neil, Me Little Kettle."
9. A single-stanza fragment about a local merchant hiring a Tickle Cove crew to go fishing in the north of Newfoundland.
10. "Tickle Cove Pond" or "Kit on the Pond" (about which most of this paper deals).
11. "Tickle Cove Pond II" (a lament for having left Newfoundland).
12. Only the title is known of "Gains I Owe in Many Lands."

Another Time

The key figure in the new popularity of Walker's work is Ron Hynes (b. 1950), Newfoundland's best-known and most prolific song-maker of the current era (Pierson

⁸ Although Winterbrook, a mile or two from Sweet Bay, may have been named for its transhumant role, local oral history has nearby Summerville's name origin different. Named Indian Arm until the early 20th century, a name change was required by the Post Office in 1916. "St. Anne's" was put forward by Catholics; this was countered by "Somerville" by Protestants to commemorate the link to Orangeism's Lord Somerville. Perhaps as a compromise, perhaps as a parallel to nearby Winterbrook, "Summerville" was chosen (M. Warren, 20 Aug. 2002, pers. comm.).

1996; Wade 1991).⁹ Hynes rarely records other people's songs but in 1991 he recorded a startlingly lovely version of "Tickle Cove Pond," accompanied by harp, cello and violin (Walsh & Russell 1991). The "harp" was an electronic keyboard played by Rick Hollett; Christina Smith played cello, and Kelly Russell the violin (Walsh 2002; K. Russell 2002). It turned a new audience on to this and other songs by Walker. As much a product of Hynes's creative impulse as that of the engineer and arrangers, Don Walsh and Kelly Russell, the track is popularly seen as a particularly sensitive treatment of a Newfoundland folksong.

The album on which it appeared, *Another Time* (Walsh & Russell 1991), represented a key point in the development of local sensibilities about Newfoundland traditional music. As Saugères (1992) points out, a generation of young Newfoundlanders came of age in the late 1960s and early 1970s with a sense that a small fraction of the province's traditional music had been tapped in a public way. That small proportion was seen to be over-worked and rather boring compared to the treasures that were being uncovered by musical groups like Figgy Duff. The small proportion almost exactly corresponded to what was found in the series of songbooks compiled and distributed by Newfoundland businessman Gerald S. Doyle beginning in 1927 (Rosenberg 1991; 1994). Two decades passed with little or no interest by popular performers in the Doyle books. To the 1970s generation of revivalists, they had been the epitome of over-worked and uninteresting Newfoundland songs. By revisionist contrast, *Another Time* was seen by its producers as an attempt to draw fresh water from Doyle's well.

By trying to revise the common perception of the songs in Doyle's books, Kelly Russell and Don Walsh were re-inventing the recent past. The very title of the album suggested a reconstruction of an over-played but disconnected past, as well as their attempt to resuscitate the music by applying new rhythms and tempos. In Kelly Russell's words:

The whole concept of the album was my idea. It was to revitalise or create some renewed interest in these songs, specifically the Gerald S. Doyle canon of songs which I felt perhaps were popular back in the fifties, sixties or even before that, I don't know, but had certainly fallen out of usage in the seventies and eighties and into the nineties. The whole trend with bands like Figgy Duff was to come up with other Newfoundland songs besides that standard material. The attitude was there was a lot better material and a lot more to Newfoundland music than just these well-known songs that you'll find in Doyle. So I thought perhaps it's just the overuse, and the fact they've been discarded. And there was an attitude among the younger generation that these songs perhaps were inferior or somehow not the best material. So I thought it would be a good idea to revisit them and perhaps by musical arrangement and competence by some musicians with maybe a better or different outlook towards music and how to accompany these

⁹ At the May 2002 convocation, Hynes was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Memorial University of Newfoundland.

songs, we might breathe new life in them. (K Russell 2002)¹⁰ In the decade since its release, the album has sold about 4500 copies which is far more than most local records. Its local market is now slower but it continues to sell well each summer to an open-ended tourist market (K. Russell 2002).

The album served Russell's purpose. It brought forward a dozen old-fashioned songs (to his generation's mind) and made them available in modern arrangements to a new generation of listeners and performers. The production of the album was deliberately jazzy and up-to-date, using techniques like computer-generated accompaniment (on "Jack was Every Inch a Sailor") and an electronic keyboard to sample other instruments (on several songs). The metre and tempo of songs were "re-jigged" especially to give them a more up-beat sound, one that did not suggest the 1950s and '60s versions that had been their usual over-worked forms.

"Tickle Cove Pond" was felt to have been one of these over-used songs. There was no special attempt to include that particular song in the project; it was just one of the three dozen texts in the available edition (the 1978 one) of Doyle's book. But, once Ron Hynes was asked to be part of it, he knew he wanted to use that song:

We were approached to come up with what we felt was our favourite Newfoundland song to record. They didn't necessarily want to pick the material for you; they wanted you to pick the material, and they would arrange it and record it. And it seemed to me at the time I could remember a couple of songs that my father specifically liked. One of them was "The Badger Drive." And the other, I was pretty sure, was "Tickle Cove Pond." But, to be perfectly honest with you, I don't think I did any kind of research on it. And I'm not really sure how I know it. It's an odd little mystery to me where the first fascination with that song came because I knew it before I went in to the recording but I have no clear memory of why. And it may have been just one of those songs that I heard more than others. (Hynes 2002)

"Tickle Cove Pond" is about a man whose horse balks at crossing a pond with a load of wood in late winter, but who drives her on anyway. Horse, cart, wood, and man all go through the ice; neighbours rush out to help. Besides being a vignette of what rural Newfoundland life was like in the nineteenth century, it contains the embedded widespread belief that animals can sense danger that "man is too stupid to know" (Whitlock 1992; Creighton 1968: 55-56, #150; Cousins 1991: 209-212). Few songs are quite like this story; a more modern one is Omar Blondahl's mid-1950s song, "Concerning Charlie Horse," about the removal from a pond of a horse's carcass by friends of the horse's owner. The horse drowned the previous winter after going through the ice while hauling wood (Blondahl 1956a). As Anderson points out with regard to political movements, certain cultural products can be sparks of imagination for a people, as they go about the process of "imagining a past" (Anderson 1983). "Tickle Cove Pond" is such a work of imagination.

¹⁰ Excerpts from all my interviews have been edited slightly for clarity of sense.

A typical set of lyrics for "Tickle Cove Pond" is to be found in Gerald S. Doyle's 1940 *Old-Time Songs of Newfoundland* (pp. 18-19, here with small emendations to the punctuation):¹¹

In cuttin' and haulin' in frost and in snow
 We're up against troubles that few people know.
 And only by patience with courage and grit
 And eatin' plain food can we keep ourselves fit.
 5 The hard and the aisey we take as it comes.
 And when ponds freeze over we shorten our runs.
 To hurry my hauling – the Spring coming on,
 Near lost me my mare on Tickle Cove Pond.

CHORUS

Oh, lay hold William Oldford, lay hold William White,
 10 Lay hold of the cordage and pull all your might,
 Lay hold of the bowline and pull all you can,
 And give me a lift for poor Kit on the pond.
 I knew that the ice became weaker each day,
 But still took the risk and kept hauling away.

15 One evening in April, bound home with a load,
 The mare showed some halting against the ice road
 And knew more than I did, as matters turned out,
 And lucky for me had I joined in her doubt.
 She turned 'round her head, and with tears in her eyes,
 20 As if she were saying: "You're risking our lives."
 21 All this I ignored with a whip-handle blow,
 For man is too stupid dumb creatures to know.
 The very next minute the pond gave a sigh,
 And down to our necks went poor Kitty and I.

25 For if I had taken wise Kitty's advice,
 I never would take the short cut on the ice.
 "Poor creature she's dead and poor creature she's gone;
 I'll never get my wood off Tickle Cove Pond."
 I raised an alarm you could hear for a mile.

30 And neighbours turned up in a very short while.
 You can always rely on the Oldfords and Whites
 To render assistance in all your bad plights.
 To help a poor neighbour is part of their lives;
 The same I can say of their children and wives.

35 When the bowline was fastened around the mare's breast
 William White for a shanty song made a request.
 There was no time for thinking, no time for delay.
 So straight from his head came this song right away:
 "Lay hold William Oldford, lay hold William White.

40 Lay hold of the hawser and pull all your might.
 Lay hold to the bowline and pull all you can."
 42 And with that we brought Kit out of Tickle Cove Pond.

¹¹ This is the second edition of Doyle's books, published by his own company, Gerald S. Doyle, Ltd., St. John's. The five editions were 1927, 1940, 1955, 1966 and 1978. See Rosenberg 1991; 1994. Doyle's 1927 edition did not include "Tickle Cove Pond."

Besides the attractive music of Hynes's 1991 rendition, the song's current popularity stems from a variety of semiological threads: the wisdom of the horse; the wistful and guilty sense of betrayal of a loved pet by the narrator; the fresh image of a "traditional Newfoundland" unattached to the sea and involving carrying wood across freshwater (in contrast to fish across saltwater); the strong song culture apparently integrated into daily work; and the respectful sense of community represented in the song. That the song has no obvious connection to the sea was exploited in a 2000 compilation of "cowboy songs" that included it (McCurdy 1954).¹²

According to Paul Mercer's index (1979), "Tickle Cove Pond" first found its way into print through the 1937 collection of Newfoundland poems and songs in Joe Smallwood's *Book of Newfoundland* (Smallwood 1937: 468). Gerald S. Doyle included it in his 1940 songbook and may have contributed it to Smallwood three years earlier (although there are small but significant textual differences). Although Smallwood's publication never achieved wide distribution in Newfoundland, Doyle's did (Rosenberg 1991; 1994). Doyle's – not Smallwood's – publication of the song sent it on its first spin of widespread familiarity.

There are few or no tracks of its path before the Second World War. The song's popularity seems to have been limited to oral transmission, and that undocumented, in that time. Doyle's books were the source of several songs for the Irene B. Mellon band, on the popular regional radio programme of the same name, 1934-41 (Hiscock 1995), but there is no evidence the band ever performed the song (Hiscock 1987). The song is not included in the approximately twenty songs issued in 1938-39 as "The Barrelman Song Sheets 1-6," an adjunct to the popular radio series *The Barrelman* (MUNFLA 83-013; PD324/78-364; Hiscock 1994). Also associated with *The Barrelman* radio programme was a monthly newspaper, *The Newfoundlander*, published by F. M. O'Leary, Ltd, a commercial interest that, like Gerald Doyle's, traded partly on Newfoundland traditional culture. "Tickle Cove Pond" is listed in its song-request lists in 1944 and was published there in November of that year ("Favourite..." 1944). Edith Fowke's "Old Favourites" listing of *Family Herald* songs has it published in that Montreal-based paper, 24 August 1949 (Fowke 1978).

Since the early 1950s, it has been printed many times. Leo English included it in his free-distribution government booklet for tourists and locals, *Historic Newfoundland*, from its second edition, 1957, on. (Only the song's title was included in the first edition of 1955, as one of a list of ten "most favourite songs" of Newfoundland.) The English text and tune were both taken, facsimile, from Doyle's 1955 booklet. This booklet is second only to Doyle's own songbooks for wide distribution into the homes of Newfoundland and may have exceeded it; it was published by the Newfoundland government almost annually through the 1960s and '70s. As Mercer (1979) points out, Omar Blondahl included the song in his songbook (1964: 16), and Dick Nolan included it in his edition of the Bennett Brewery songbook (1974: 7). In 1995, Arthur Sullivan printed the text in his *No Strangers Here*, essentially a reprinting of English's booklet. Unless one counts Doyle and Smallwood, both of whom may have gotten it from oral sources, there are no records of it being collected from oral tradition. Through its public life, the song has relied

¹² That Ron Hynes's second choice for *Another Time* was "The Badger Drive," a song about industrial woodwork (Ashton 1994) and another song without obvious connections to the saltwater, parallels this point.

strongly on the Doyle text for its form. It has been in print at least a dozen times, and currently finds itself on the WorldWide Web at least five times.¹³

There has been at least a dozen popular culture recordings of "Tickle Cove Pond" over the past fifty-five years. The earliest sound recording of "Tickle Cove Pond" seems to have been Gerald S. Doyle's private issue disc by The Commodore's Quartet about 1948 (Taft 1975; Commodore's 1948?). Doyle was from King's Cove, Bonavista Bay, an afternoon's walk from Tickle Cove, and he probably heard the song in oral tradition in his hometown area. In any case, he had published it eight years earlier in his songbook, and all the popular culture versions seem to stem from his text. Solo performers, small musical groups and full choirs have recorded the song. As can be seen from the list of sound recordings in the Appendix to this paper, there was a flurry of recordings of the song in the middle of the twentieth century and another at the end. The first was touched off by the Gerald Doyle songbook. The second was touched off by Ron Hynes's recording.

Aesthetics in the tune and verse

"Tickle Cove Pond" is an attractive song and fairly easy to sing. The singer's pleasure is increased by clever sound play, assonances, internal rhymes and near rhymes. The tune has a vocal range that is just beyond an octave. In one printed tune it goes from B to C+ (Doyle 1940 and later editions) and in another from A to C+ (West 1998). A third transcription (the only other seen) is Kelly Russell's (ca. 1995) of Ron Hynes's performance which goes from -G to +B, the longest range (and lowest key).

The tune is derived from the Irish tune "Tatter Jack Walsh," which also goes by several other names in Ireland (Ng 2002).¹⁴ References to the tune place it fairly widely in Ireland. Mark Walker's father, Marcus, emigrated from Ireland in the 1840s and perhaps this tune came with him. Usually classified as a "double jig" (meaning 6/8 time), "Tatter Jack Walsh" is normally transcribed in 6/8 time. The text of "Tickle Cove Pond" is cast in anapestic tetrameter, meaning there are ideally twelve syllables per line, in four three-beat feet, fitting either a 3/4 or 6/8 time.¹⁵ Doyle's (1940) tune gives 6/8 as its time signature, but the song is commonly sung in 3/4 time. The Hynes version was deliberately slowed down and altered exactly "to get the threes out of it" (Walsh 2002), bringing it back into 6/8 time. Nonetheless Russell's transcription gives 3/4 as its signature (K. Russell ca. 1995).

The text is filled with clever assonances. Note, for instance, the similarity of sound between "Kit On the Pond" and "Tickle Cove Pond," alternate titles of the song

¹³ In mid-June 2002 these five sites had full texts of "Tickle Cove Pond":
www.sover.net/~beckeith/comingdawn.html ; www.lunarpages.com/nfldsongs/01/tickle.htm;
www.pigeoninlet.nfnet.com/songs.htm; ngb.chebucto.org/Bonavista/Songs/ticklev.html;
www3.pei.sympatico.ca/scotts/tickle-cove-pond.html.

¹⁴ In Alan Ng's compendium of Irish fiddle tunes (2002) it is numbered Ng#1850. The tune is alternately known as "Father Jack Walsh," O'Neill 136, in O'Neill (1907). "Tatter" means "father."

¹⁵ Three MIDI files are available at <http://www.lunarpages.com/nfldsongs/smmz.htm> – each is slightly different in speed and metre but can illustrate the shape of the text/tune.

and phrases repeated in the verse. "Kit" is the first syllable of Tickle turned backwards. The last line of the song, like the last line of each verse, "And with that we got Kit out of Tickle Cove Pond" shows the internal near-rhyme of Kit and Tick-, along with an anapestic stress pattern following them to mirror one to the other – a strong beat is followed by two short ones and another strong one: ' ` ` '. It is easy to see why the song's two titles have been interchangeable.

In many sung versions of "Tickle Cove Pond," a modification of the anapestic tetrameter places an iambic foot (rather than an anapest) at the beginning of most lines, leaving usually eleven syllables. In this example, the first two lines and the last line have the iambic opening (two beats), while the third has the full anapest (three beats).

In CUT- / -tin and HAUL- / -in in FROST / and in SNOW
 We're UP / against TROUB- / -les that FEW / people KNOW
 And it's ON- / -ly with PA- / -tience and COUR- / -age and GRIT
 And EAT / -in plain FOOD / that we KEEP / ourselves FIT

Different singers construct the metre of the song differently. For musical reasons, the iamb is often converted into a spondee (a foot of two equal and strong beats) in these opening lines. In some versions the first note of each verse is drawn out so long that one might count as many as four "normal" beats (eg., CJON 1956). This is partly a result of the fairly complicated beat. Syncopation of the first foot is required to carry off the iamb and not every singer feels comfortable with changing the two soft syllables into a long note (and thus a strong beat). This is done especially on the first lines of each stanza and chorus:

INNN CUT- /-tin and HAUL- / -in in FROST / and in SNOW

or

LAAY HOLD / William OLD- / -ford lay HOLD / William WHITE

A singer has a great deal of freedom in performance; for instance, line two of the version above might be made fully anapestic by the expansion of "We're" into "We are", and line four by the insertion of "by" before "eating." The insertion of expletive particles is the common manner of ironing out the wrinkles of syncopation. Of the recorded versions at hand, Dermot O'Reilly and Fergus O'Byrne provide the truest anapestic rendering. They insert expletive particles on 17 of 34 stanzaic lines (*i.e.*, those not sung as part of the burden/chorus): these take the form of words like well, so, now and and. The least anapestic renderings may be those of Lew Murphy or Meredith Hall, both of whom had classical voice training and show a great deal of variability in their vowel lengths. What this indicates is that the song has a fairly complicated rhythmic structure that allows singers a good degree of freedom to make it rhythmically interesting to them, and thus a more enjoyable song.

It is worthy of note that the name "Kit" in its various forms turns up in many of Walker's songs. In "Tickle Cove Pond" both "Kit" and Kitty" appear. In two variants, White 1964 and CJON 1956, the name appears as "Katie." The song "Lovely Katie-O" is about a former girlfriend whose name sometimes appears as "Kitty." Walker's song "Fanny's Harbour Bawn" is about winning the heart of a young woman named Catherine Murphy. He seems to have liked the name! One of his daughters was called Catherine

and she was called variously Kit, Kitty, Katie, Kathleen and Kate all her life. A granddaughter was named for this daughter and she too has been called all these variants through her life (Cashin 2002). Intriguingly Walker's song "Nellie Neal, Me Little Kettle" uses "kettle" as an endearment and it may represent a pun on the name.

It is convenient to distinguish the "oral traditions" from the "popular traditions" of folksong. It is not a distinction with unlimited utility – there is a constant overlap and a large grey area of mixing between them. Nonetheless, there are certain objective differences: the oral tradition tends to be a more local one with greater variability in form, while the popular tradition tends to be widely distributed in crystallized (invariable) forms for commercial purposes. With regard to the Newfoundland song tradition, the oral tradition can be measured by what is in the MUNFLA Song Title Index; it represents for the most part field recordings by folklorists and folklore students. The popular tradition can be measured by the body of published, commercial records and CDs. Conveniently, the periods covered by both are about the same: the last forty or fifty years. The MUNFLA Song Title Index has not even a single report of "Tickle Cove Pond" from the oral tradition.

The transcriptions of a dozen or more extant versions of "Tickle Cove Pond" are very consistent textually, reflecting the fact that the song is one of a small group of Newfoundland folk songs that seem to exist only in the popular tradition. Each of these canonical, "key texts" (Rosenberg 1991) turns up in many popular publications, and is recorded frequently for broadcast and commercial distribution. In contrast, they have rarely been collected by folklorists and folklore students who, in recording local singers, have focussed on oral tradition. Perhaps that is because, being very popular in the media, they were seen as "common" by singers, as "belonging" to the popular performers, or even as having a prestige form that differed from local texts leading to a tendency to suppress local forms. Or, perhaps, for narrative or stylistic reasons, they are not the kind of songs that were popular with traditional singers (Casey, Rosenberg & Wareham 1972; Pocius 1976).

Textual Variation

Unlike most oral tradition folk songs, there is very little textual variation among the two dozen or so texts of "Tickle Cove Pond" put to either paper or audio recording in the past 65 years. No doubt this is due to the strong value the song has had for popular performers whose public versions have achieved a kind of hegemony in the textual market. Singers, public or private, normally have more than one text to choose from, as well as their own freedom to modify texts. As noted already, the free-distribution Doyle songsters, and the English booklet later, enabled most mid-twentieth-century singers to find a ready-written and easily-at-hand text in which to ground their performance of "Tickle Cove Pond." English and Doyle used the same text and tune, the English being a facsimile of the Doyle.¹⁶ But despite that freely available Doyle text, small differences, some quite meaningful, have crept in.

Folklorists like to distinguish between, on the one hand, collections of oral texts of songs put together by and for folklorists engaged in the scholarly study of songs in

¹⁶ The English text was re-set for the 1985 revised edition, *Historic Newfoundland and Labrador* to reflect small changes in punctuation and spelling.

vernacular tradition and, on the other hand, "songsters" or books of songs put together by enthusiasts of song for wider distribution to people who want to sing them. We might call them "singing books" but Wilgus uses this term for high-art arrangements of folksongs (Wilgus 1959: 167), so for convenience I call them "songsters" and their compilers "songsterists." The distinction between songsters and folklore collections of songs is an "ideal" one and, granted, a grey area exists between them, but folklorists normally try to present songs in print as closely as possible to the form they have recorded informants singing. Songsterists make mechanical, structural, musical and other aesthetic decisions about their texts in order to best achieve their ends: a singable text, or a text suggestive of a lifestyle they want to illustrate. Performers likewise make changes to bring the song closer to what fits their vocal range, textual style and comprehension (Ives 1970: 72). Of the print forms of "Tickle Cove Pond" (see the list in the Appendix), all are much closer to the songster type than to the scholarly record; this reflects, of course, the lack of field recordings of oral tradition texts.

The scholar tries to reproduce the performance of the people from whom s/he has collected the songs. That reproduction is necessarily a filtering process and one that today increasingly involves a self-awareness on the part of the scholar about her/his intentions that perhaps was not as heightened fifty years ago. No matter the medium, there are limits of reproduction; most folklorists learn early that taking "transcription" beyond the limits of one's own analytical needs can appear patronizing in its published form (Ives 1995: 75 ff.).

In discussing creativity in song, Ives discusses changes individual singers can introduce (1970: 72-73). Songster producers "perform" in a way parallel to oral performance but with additional motive force. They do not reflect so much individual performances as they direct their singing readers to perform in a certain way. The songsterist may choose to reproduce earlier textual performances (for instance, by repeating punctuation, spellings, breakdowns into stanzas, and the like) or may try to remove what they see as inconsistencies or unclear spots. In the case of "Tickle Cove Pond," most songsters have reproduced fairly closely the form of the song as printed by Doyle. The commonest differences are the uses of punctuation. Despite the near-repetition, and thus near-invisibility, these are performative decisions by the songsterist, just as the repetition of a line, or the speaking of a final line is a performative decision by a singer. They have different effects, but the media of performance is likewise very different. The decision by a songsterist to spell the gerundial form of "to cut" as cuttin' is at once a pointer to oral performance, at least an idealized one, and – far more importantly – a performance by the publisher that has meaning in itself.

As already noted, Doyle's version is the one that spread most widely around Newfoundland. In producing a singable version of the song, in 1940 Doyle placed the "Lay hold William Oldford ..." lines after verse 1, labelled them "chorus," and (in the 1955 and following editions) included the instruction "Repeat chorus" at the end. Singers "search[ing] for solace in ... authenticity" (Bohlman 1988: 10) would have followed Doyle's text, the most available one, as closely as possible. In the popular tradition, this song is most often sung with the repeated chorus after most verses. Singing the chorus after each main stanza can throw off the structure of the last main stanza, forcing some singers to drop lines or to recast the tune in small ways. Hynes and his producers discussed the use of the chorus before they turned on the recorder. Kelly Russell, one of the producers, felt the chorus interrupted the flow of the story (K. Russell 2002). Except for the problematic chorus, Hynes found the song ready-to-sing:

Tickle Cove Pond was just kind of full-blown except for there was a two-line stanza. He [Walker] has eight-line verses, but he has one that sticks out like a sore thumb. It was just writing in an unlearned style, in a non-academic style, a folk style. That was enough; he'd said what he had to say there. What is the lyric? "There was no time for thinkin, no time for delay. So straight from his head came a song right away." It's another two lines that get tagged on to an eight-line verse right in the middle of the song or near the end of the song. So I made a little musical bridge out of that. That's where the music just kind of goes somewhere else for a while. It uses a different musical progression – only once in the song. And then it returns to your basic melody (Hynes 2002).

Hynes's bridge technique has been used at least twice since then, by Connemara (1993) and Hall (2002). (There are other indications of their having followed Hynes: "Near lost me a mare" (l. 8) and "I'll ne'er get my mare..." (l. 28) are sung in both; these are variant lines introduced by Hynes.) Twenty-six years before *Another Time*, John White (1965) deleted the two difficult lines (ll. 37-38). Ten years before that, Ignatius Rumboldt's choir reduced the tune in that part of the song to a repeated two-line figure to allow for a half-verse (CJON 1956).

Almost all the recorded versions use the repeated chorus as Doyle indicates. However, popular singer Anita Best learnt her performance version of the song from Moses Harris, a traditional singer originally from Open Hall (about five miles from Tickle Cove) and living at the time in Lethbridge, BB (about fifteen miles further). Harris was a well-known and prolific singer, the source for about a fifth of the songs in the songbook Best collaborated on in the 1970s (Lehr 1985). Best remembers not including "Tickle Cove Pond" in the book because it was "too common" (Best 2002). Harris did not sing it with a chorus; instead the "Lay hold..." lines are simply incorporated into the last verse and repeated there *ad libitum*. Best feels the original form of the song was without a repeated chorus and this is how she sings it today (Best 2002).

Many smaller variations exist in spelling and – in the sound recordings – the parallel pronunciations. Right from the first publications of this song, the final -g's in "cutting and hauling" (line 1) were elided. Just why is not clear; such spellings ("eye dialect" in the minds of dialectologists) tell us as much or more about the intentions of the speller than about the sound of the speech. Also from the earliest printed version of "Tickle Cove Pond," the word "easy" (in line five) is spelt "aisey," in an effort to capture a feature of some local dialects. Some singers (e.g., Hall) do not bother to enunciate this non-standardism, but most do so in what can seem a rather precious attempt to sound local. The 1956 recording by the CJON Glee Club is a case in point with perfect enunciation of most words but deliberately elided -g's and a pronunciation of "easy" that rhymes with "lazy." Some recent printed versions have reduced the number of these eye dialect forms (e.g., Drake 2000: 26; Russell ca. 1995: [9-10]). In most printed versions these elisions are dropped after just a few lines.

The difference between singing, for example, cuttin' and writing it in a printed form is a significant one. On the printed page, non-standard spellings are flags of difference from the otherwise standard form of received written English. Speech is naturally much more flexible in register than writing. Aurally, colloquial pronunciations are practically invisible unless called attention to by a context of otherwise fully articulate, educated speech. Thus the cognitive dissonance felt by many listeners when

first they hear a "folk" song sung by a choral group. My high school friends and I in the 1960s were not alone making delicious fun of our school choir rehearsing D. F. Cook's arrangements of canonical Newfoundland folksongs. Ray Guy used to call this style of choral folk song the "maggoty fish school" for the perceived mismatch between lovely voices and rough topics.

Perhaps the greatest attempt to use local colour pronunciation in singing this song is on its earliest sound recording, by The Commodore's Quartet in about 1948. These four men, including director Carl Tapscott, began singing with the Royal Canadian Navy during the Second World War and continued a successful musical career after the war, eventually expanding into the Carl Tapscott Singers (Ford 1992).¹⁷ According to Doyle's son Thomas, his father went to Toronto to record the song by a men's group as it was "a men's song." The singers, he explained, had "never seen the words before" (T. Doyle, personal communication, 19 June 2002). Doyle had had the music prepared in four-part harmony (for a barbershop-style men's group), probably by either Robert MacLeod or Ignatius Rumboldt, both of whom were active members of the St. John's choral community and previously worked for him transcribing his field recordings of Newfoundland songs (Krachun 1991; Wade 1993; Woodford 1984). Two lines of this version go as follows:

The ha'd and the aisey we takes as it comes;
When ponds freezes over, we shortens our runs. (Commodore's 1948?)

Here we not only have the usual cuttin, haulin and aisey, we also have final -s added to present tense verbs, and an apparent attempt to reproduce an r-less dialect pronunciation of hard. The contrast with the otherwise central-Canadian pronunciations found in the performance (e.g., of poor and tears) is apparent.

Making such pointed adjustments to a text, calling attention to the differences between it and standard English, is a way of distancing the writer, performer, collector, presenter or publisher, from the material at hand. It is a way of saying, "This is not the way I speak" (Bowdre 1964; Hiscock 1982). It thereby "imagines" (in Anderson's term) a nonce-culture out of which the song comes, a culture that in contrast to the educated, middle-class, worldly culture represented by print, is uneducated, lower-class, and provincial. Thus, it is a statement of class that a straightforward standard-English presentation would not be. Oral versions of most traditional songs are usually presented in a non-self-conscious form of English, one that does not call attention to the speech of the singer. The exceptions like "I's The B'y" or Great Big Sea's "What are You At?" are exceptions for a reason: both are raised flags of self-conscious cultural expression.¹⁸ "What Are You At?" was written by and for urbane, educated, modern people. We don't know the full origin of "I's the B'y" but it seems it took its current "dialect" form as a result of mediation by middle-class print sources and performances (Hiscock 2000). Similarly,

¹⁷ Some twenty-five years later, in 1975, the Carl Tapscott Singers recorded an LP record called *Songs of Newfoundland* but did not include this song: RCA Victor KXLI-0092 (MUNFLA R475da).

¹⁸ Other examples include Art Scammell's "Long May Your Big Jib Draw" (1956, in *My Newfoundland*, Tom Cahill's "Stay Where You're To Till We Comes Where You're At" and Peter Narváez's "Proper Ting".

Taft (1979) has discussed the varied and emergent meanings of the iconic phrase "Up she comes!" in the contexts of beer ads and songs sung by bar musicians.

To summarize: not all Newfoundland songs are rendered in a kind of faux dialect. Very few are. Where did the "Tickle Cove Pond" tradition of spelling cuttin' and haulin' in this song begin? Smallwood's 1937 text is the earliest and his gerunds are apostrophized, as they remain in almost all other versions. Smallwood has a couple of extra contractions: an' in the first line, and 'tis in line three. In later texts these extras are not to be found. But Doyle's text continued the eye-dialect tradition (carried on aurally by Doyle's recording) and it has been followed in the main ever since. The least non-standard forms are the most recently printed ones (K. Russell ca. 1995; Drake 2000); in one case (Drake) only the lyrics are so – on the music page the words are spelt non-standard.¹⁹

Changes or choices like cuttin' or aisey are made for instrumental reasons – they indicate to the reader/listener that the song is a representative product of a less literate culture than that of the performer/publisher. In other words, such choices stigmatize the song by suggesting rurality, old-fashionedness, and lack of education. They establish a duality of voice – that of the singer, and that of the protagonist, presumably the song-maker. Certain typos crept into the Doyle text between its 1940 and 1955 editions. Interestingly, the plural -s on the word "minute" (line 23) was one; the pronunciation "minutes" is found in the recordings by Ron Hynes and Blondahl.²⁰ This spelling was changed to "minute" in the post-1985 editions of English, which otherwise drew on Doyle.

It may be significant that the most working-class of the performers, the one with the most locally marked forms in his speech and persona, John White, did not bother with such dialect niceties. He sings the song as he does other songs (White 1965) and one has the sense it is mainly in his own dialect. The text sounds as if he had learnt it some time before and was singing it from the kind of long-term memory that normally informs "oral texts." For example (by my eye-dialect transcription):

Lay ahol' William Oldford, lay hol' William White.
Lay hol' of the cordage and pull all your might.
Lay hold of the bow line and pull all ya can
And give me a lift for poor Kate on the pond.

...
To help a poor creature is part o' their lives;
I'm a' can say fer their children and wives.

(I don't know exactly what White meant in the last line.)

¹⁹ It is interesting that at least one other Doyle text ("The Ryans and the Pittmans" – Doyle 1940: 53) has dialect forms ("[I] cuts a big figure/ Whenever I gets in a boat's standing room.") that are not always present in other versions (eg., English 1955: 53; but Doyle was here following James Murphy 1912: 6).

²⁰ Ron Hynes says that more than any other performance or recording he'd heard, Blondahl's was influential, being the first version he remembers hearing (Hynes 2002).

The three terms used in the song for ropes are essentially interchangeable in meaning: bow line, hawser and cordage (and a fourth – ropes – is used idiosyncratically in Smallwood 1937). Nonetheless, most singers follow the order in which they are used in the Doyle text. Anita Best pointed out that her source, Moses Harris, sang them in whatever order came to his mind, and she follows this practice, feeling the freer attitude reflects better the traditional roots of the song (Best 2002). Anita Best also likes to point out that when Harris sang the song, he sang "straight from my head" (instead of "his," line 38), which to her reading, and mine I might add, makes more sense of the story of the song: "He was the songwriter, right?" (Best 2002). It is interesting that the only printed version of the song in which the word "my" is used here is Smallwood (1937).²¹

The version printed in 1944 in the *Newfoundlander* newspaper has a variant phrase in line 34: "The same can be said for their sweethearts and wives" instead of the usual "children and wives." The regular column in which the text appeared had as its stock in trade songs of two sorts: popular songs of the day in which "sweethearts" were often mentioned, and traditional Newfoundland songs some of which certainly dealt with that role but not usually that word. Perhaps this was a slip-up by the compositor or contributor, but more likely it represents a true rendering of how someone was singing the song. The use of this phrase reduces the effect of the community of mutual aid that is traced by "children and wives" (more about which below).

Intriguingly, in his 1956 recording, Omar Blondahl does not sing the phrase "Tickle Cove Pond" as a full proper noun (Blondahl 1956b). Instead he inserts the definite article in front of it, "the Tickle Cove pond," making it into an apparent common noun (T. Porter 1999: 34). This serves a metrical purpose as well as introducing a slight difference of meaning. With the definite article the pond no longer has a proper name: it is merely the pond in Tickle Cove. Without the definite article, one is reciting its proper name – "Tickle Cove Pond" – and thereby establishing the context of known and named spaces and thus community.

From a semiological point of view, perhaps the most important variation in the song is the substitution Ron Hynes made in singing it: instead of the line, "I'll ne'er get my wood off of Tickle Cove Pond," he sang, "I'll ne'er get my mare..." (line 28). Anita Best speaks of the puzzlement of some of her audiences in hearing the song and being unable to reconcile lines 22 and 28: "man is too stupid dumb creatures to know," and "I'll ne'er get my wood off of Tickle Cove Pond." The one suggests a deep respect for the animal while the other seems to suggest the wood is far more important than the horse. Hynes's change of a single word changed the overall sensibility of the song, heightening its sentiment about the man's love for his horse, and reflecting the lines about the horse's silent communication and the man's self-recognition of being "too stupid dumb creatures to know." At the same time, it changed the song from a mainly workaday song about the tribulations of traditional work activities, to a much more sensitive song about a man's relationship with his working partner, a trusting horse. Thus the horse is romanticized and Hynes brought the song further into the urbane culture of the late twentieth century. As with any element of art, a single lyrical line may have two hooks. Hynes's change of wood to mare also made an aesthetic change, introducing an internal

²¹ Martha Warren's web site ngb.chebucto.org/Bonavista/Songs/ticklecv.html also has this variant, having used Smallwood as her source (Warren 2002).

rhyme between ne'er and mare, and adding to the substantial pile of original internal rhymes in the song.

The meanings of "Tickle Cove Pond"

That songs in current circulation have variant meanings is no surprise since all folklore varies, in meaning as well as in form. It is no exaggeration to say that the folklore with the best chance to survive through time is the folklore with the greatest level of Bakhtin's polysemy, dialogism (Bakhtin 1981). Like any folklore, or like any art for that matter, songs don't always mean to their originators (and to their first "community of song") how they mean to us latecomers and outsiders. The initial encoding may not be the same as the later decodings. As Newfoundland singer and folklorist Pat Byrne has pointed out, "When people start to really study the [folk] music... it begins to mean something that it probably never did mean to the people who actually sang it" (FitzPatrick 2001). With such recrystallization, "original" meanings may be unrecoverable.

"Tickle Cove Pond" fits this pattern of polysemy and has had continued success because of it. For its modern "readers" – and by this I mean those who interpret the song either by listening to or performing it – the song provides several points of congruency with modern ideas of Newfoundland's past: neighbourliness, connection to nature, and a memory or suggestion of a rich song culture integrated into daily life. They are not necessarily the same as the readings of the song in earlier times.

The suggestion of completely integrated work and song culture is made by the song's reference to a "shanty song." Shanties are a class of songs used to coordinate work activities, especially when hauling (Hugill 1969). They were fairly well-known in Newfoundland and one commonly reported shanty parallels lines from "Tickle Cove Pond": "Haul on the bo'line, / Kitty burst her tow-line, / Haul on the bo'line, / Haul, boys Haul!" (Greenleaf 1968: 338, italics in original) and a version of it has been popularly sung in pubs in the 1990s.²² The fact that modern society no longer has such a workaday use of song makes richer the suggestion of an earlier community of song. Nonetheless, such total communities of song probably never existed, despite the compliance of some early folklorists in the promulgation of the myth, a point discussed more generally by Bohlman (1988: 70-72). The myth runs counter to the tradition of identifying song-makers, the specialists in song, something that inevitably suggests the existence of people who were not singers and song-makers. It is therefore a matter of modern imagination and literary verisimilitude, rather than straight documentation and historicity. This leads to modern readers' points of variance: Is the song true? Does the horse die? Are the names, as sung, correct? The dynamics of these semiological variations help propel the song as a matter of current and popular interest.

Is the song true? Simple views and dialogic views

²² The song, "Haul Her Along" (based on this and another shanty, "Johnny Poker"), was written by Maureen Ennis of the Newfoundland musical group Ennis Sisters who recorded it on their privately issued 2000 cd *Ennis Sisters 3. Celtic Connection*, another local group, recorded it on their privately issued cd *Best Of ... Ten Years Together* (2001). Both versions enjoy popularity on local radio stations.

For most listeners, "truth," historicity, is not a matter of variance or argument – everyone I've spoken to has assumed that "Tickle Cove Pond" tells a true story. It is an admired point about the song, a reason to like it. It's sometimes suggested popularly that all traditional folksongs told true stories; another kind of song, the songs of "today" or the songs of professional song-makers, are "just made up." Old, local songs, it is thought, were not self-conscious documents of "what happened." In Ron Hynes's words:

["Tickle Cove Pond"] is a great song. And more than likely, I've always suspected, probably a true story. Those guys didn't write for the sake of trying to "write a folk song" or trying to write "pop songs" or "country." They had no ulterior motive behind the creation of work, other than to document something that had more than likely happened (Hynes 2002).

Nonetheless, "Tickle Cove Pond" is not an un-self-conscious piece of cultural documentation. Coded into it are many points of sophistication and awareness. To begin with, its voice is set partly outside the local culture. Perhaps this dual voice (Bakhtin's heteroglossia [1981] is useful) represents the insider as outsider, as Glassie suggested about song-makers in general: successful song-makers often live at the margins of their society, outsiders in their own communities (Glassie 1970). But, as with Ives's Lawrence Doyle, when compared to his neighbours, there is nothing remarkably different about Mark Walker (Ives 1971: 244-246). Or perhaps it represents the migrant's/emigrant's view; we do not know when in Walker's life it was written but, as already noted, he was already a travelling worker by the time he was a young adult, having spent summers in his teenaged years on the Labrador. The migrant's point of view is found throughout Irish popular song of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and it has continued in Newfoundland popular song to the present. As with reminiscence poetry in which authors remember things from their childhood, today much of the popular culture of Newfoundland is informed by this literary point of view.

In discussing photographic books in Newfoundland, Stuart Pierson (1985) quotes the early 20th-century philosopher R. G. Collingwood on the picturesque in art. Collingwood says the picturesque requires a contrast between the spectator and the observed (Collingwood 1925: 63). In more recent terms, the fully-insider cannot produce (nor read) the picturesque but once the wedge is driven between the Local and the hegemonic Other, the picturesque is possible. The voice of Walker's song is a picturesque voice in this contrastive sense. To achieve the contrast, the song's point of view changes, and it does so in the second line.

In cuttin' and haulin' in frost and in snow,
We're up against troubles that few people know.

Here is a subtle and sudden switch in the song's point of view. "We're" suggests the narrator is an insider. But a few words later, "that few people" suggests the view of the outsiders ("people"), a view assumed to be well-known to the listener. It is an expression of a hegemonic relationship for, after all, what outsiders' culture is well-known to those who are not powerful? The answer can only be that of the powerful; the powerless usually know the powerful far better than vice-versa. But it is an acceptance of hegemony here, not a counter-hegemonic act; an act of culture change, not an act of cultural conservatism.

The assumption of the outsiders' view may be one reason why the song has had such huge popularity among the popular culture performers of Newfoundland, and elsewhere, but has had little currency in the record of the oral tradition. Similarly, it has a growing popularity among contemporary Newfoundlanders precisely when the lifestyle of winter woods work is slipping further from their daily lives. For such fans of the song, it does not represent their own culture but it does present a point of view that is recognizable. "Few people" indeed.

An ambiguity of view, Bakhtin's heteroglossia, is also seen in the use of names in the song. Moniker songs generally name individuals and give amusing, often coded, references to them. The names are not used to suggest or connote, but to point and denote. To use the linguistic term, they are deictic songs – they point at people; they show directly and immediately who is being talked about. And they have something to say about those people.

But not all songs that list names are deictic; some are merely symbolic moniker songs. Shelley Posen has written about the structure and role of moniker songs in the Chapeau, in northeastern Ontario (Posen 1988: 64-65). In contrast to what I've called the deictic moniker songs, he also discusses a modern (1955) song, "The Sheenboro Way" that, instead of referring to individuals and saying something funny about each one, lists nine family names and says something good-hearted about all of them together (p. 60). It is a symbolic moniker song rather than an actual or deictic one. To quote Walker's "The Antis of Plate Cove",

Keough, he struck Newell the bearer, and trampled the rag to the ground.
Mavourneen, he struck Neddy Humby and frightened the Abbots and Brown.

Oh boys if you saw that fair Jenny, I'm sure you would pity her case.
And if she was handy to Ridley, he may sympathize with her grace. (M. Kelly 2002)

In these four lines, at least nine individuals are mentioned – granted: some only by their last name, or indeed their nickname.

Compare this to an excerpt from a mid-20th century Newfoundland song, "Let Me Fish Off Cape St. Mary's," a mainly popular-tradition song.

Take me back to my western boat,
Let me fish off Cape St. Mary's,
Where the hagdowns sail and the foghorns wail
With my friends the Browns and the Clearys.
Let me fish off Cape St. Mary's. (Perlin 1959)

Here the family names are not meant to refer to specific actors in the song. Instead they paint traces of meaning into the picture of the song. Perhaps Irishness is among those traces. Certainly family-ness and neighbourliness are suggested, as is something of the inter-linked nature of friendship: "my friends, the Brown and the Clearys." If one is a friend, they are all friends. It suggests, in a hinting and sly way, a clannishness of Newfoundland community, a suggestion of community itself. There is nothing painted here that suggests division in the community. In another of Mark Walker's songs, "Tickle Cove Pond - II," family names are simply listed as part of a litany of aspects of life he missed in Boston:

It's the home of Maloneys, Kellys and Neils,
Walkers, Walshes, Humbys and Gales.
Princes, Taylors and thousands that's gone
Was blessed with the waters of Tickle Cove Pond. (M. Kelly 2002)²³

Again, division is not among the suggestions.

"The Antis of Plate Cove" is quite different; it is not a song of the picturesque. Despite the use of a couple of surnames, it's clear that we are talking about individuals, and actual actors. And "Tickle Cove Pond", too, has such an actor-oriented point-of-view:

William White for a shanty song made a request.
and
Lay hold William Oldford, lay hold William White,
Lay hold of the hawser and pull all your might.

But it has the other view, too:

You can always rely on the Oldfords and Whites
To render assistance in all your bad plights.
To help a poor neighbour is part of their lives,
The same I can say of their children and wives.

Here we have the picturesque.

Oldford or Over?

According to the Over family, formerly of Tickle Cove, the original song had "Lay hold William Over" and "You can always rely on the Overs and White..." instead of Oldford (W. Over, personal communication, 2001; D. Over 2002). Not a single printed version of the song includes the name Over; they all say Oldford. (All the recorded versions but one say "Oldford"; the exception is Hall (2002) who seems to say "Orford" though in live performance she too says "Oldford.") The Over family contends the mistake arose when Gerald Doyle printed the song, using the more well-known name Oldford in error. Smallwood (1937) also wrote "Oldford," three years before Doyle.

Today the Overs live mainly in Southern Bay, BB. Daphne Over lives there, as do her daughter and her two sisters-in-law. Her late husband, Alexander "Sandy" Over was the grandson of William Over, who lived in Tickle Cove until his son's family (Alexander's father) moved to Southern Bay just before the First World War (D. Over 2002). In the Over family shed at Southern Bay, are two wrought-iron rims of cart wheels, said by family tradition to have been the rims off Kit's cart, the same Kit as in the song "Tickle Cove Pond."

Captain John Russell, who was born in 1906 in Tickle Cove and grew up in adjacent Red Cliff, says it certainly was William Over in the song (J. Russell 2002). E.

²³ Neil is traditionally pronounced "nail"; see for example the (non-Walker) song "Mary Neal" in which her surname is rhymed throughout with "gale" (eg., Peacock 1965: 216).

James Long, whose book's title quotes the song, *The Hard and the Aisey*, agrees with Russell that there is "no question" it was originally Over. He points out that there were no Oldfords living in Tickle Cove – the nearest they came was Red Cliff and only fairly late: Henry Oldford was the first to arrive there about 1865-70 (personal communication, 17 June 2002).

On the other hand, Mrs. Annie Kelly, who was born in 1913 in Tickle Cove and who has lived most of her life there, says it was Oldford. Bolstering her point of view is the large street sign welcoming visitors to Tickle Cove; it quotes the song using the name William Oldford. Even if none has lived there, there have been Oldfords active in the life of Tickle Cove in the past century. At age 91, Jim Oldford of Red Cliff is still alive in 2002 and he was one of the participants in the locally famous rowing races on Tickle Cove Pond in the 1930s, re-establishing the race commemorated in Walker's song, "The Race on Tickle Cove Pond."

E. R. Seary (1977) notes the family Over in Southern Bay and Chamberlains.²⁴ He has located Oldford families more widely in the Trinity Bay and Bonavista areas, but not at Tickle Cove. It is conceivable that the early print versions, Joe Smallwood's and Gerald S. Doyle's, "corrected" Over to Oldford – it is a widely known name, not only locally but in Eastern Newfoundland. That something as simple as a family name might change, being rationalized towards a more common name, is not unlikely. Something of the sort probably happened in oral texts of the song "The Greenland Disaster" in which the common Torbay name of Cullen is replaced by the more commonly known Collins (Peacock 1965: 926; Seary 1977).

To either add to the complications, or to simplify it, depending on your point of view, it is said by some old-time residents of the area, that members of the families have changed their spelling as needed: from Oldford to Over and vice-versa. Today the distinction in name denotes difference in religion. The Oldfords are Anglican while the Overs are United Church. For over twenty years, I have collected mentions of family name changes in Newfoundland and I do not have any record of changes back or forth between Oldford and Over in my file. Nonetheless, it parallels several other religious name differences in Newfoundland: Greenes, Puddisters and Hannams are normally Catholic, while Greens, Puddesters and Hannems are normally Protestant.

Religion in "Tickle Cove Pond"

Once we see "Tickle Cove Pond" as something more than just an account of "what happened," we are able to discuss artifice by Mark Walker. What has he coded, deliberately or otherwise, into the text? His language may suggest certain readings. As already discussed, perhaps he is showing his distance from the local community by his use of surnames. The names may also show something more.

As it happens, the choice of names in "Tickle Cove Pond" is suggestive of religious antagonisms and cross-religious community in late 19th-century Newfoundland. Mark Walker's generation of Newfoundlanders was acutely aware of the murders and riots that occurred in the country, particularly from the 1860s to the early 1880s. At the time, Walker's early adulthood, Newfoundland was a country punch-drunk with

²⁴ The Chamberlains Over was a brother of Sandy Over.

denominational violence. The last four decades of the 19th century saw a structural increase in the divisions between religions: the number of Orange Lodges, for example, went from one in 1867 to fifty in 1889 (Hiscock 1997b; James 1937; Senior 1959). Similarly increased numbers were seen by Catholic organizations (Graham 1937). Denominational education, mandated by laws introduced in 1864, was reinforced by law in 1874 (Rowe 1980: 288; 1976: 23); this decade saw the systematic disintegration of non-sectarian schooling. During this time, Bonavista South saw a slow but steady move towards consolidation of people into communities of like religion. Protestants moved to parts of the Bay where they would find the services of their church (schools, churches, cemeteries), and Catholics did likewise.

Through most of the 19th century, Tickle Cove saw an increase in Methodism, winning over mainly former Church of England adherents (Lench 1919: 160-161). Gradually however, Methodism went into decline there (only two named headstones are in the Tickle Cove Methodist cemetery, both from the 1880s) as its practitioners moved to communities like Southern Bay that became a centre of Methodism. A parallel decline in the number of Roman Catholics in Tickle Cove occurred while Church of England people were gradually increasing their numbers. The Catholics were moving to other communities in the Bay, notably Open Hall only three miles away, where a large church (Sacred Heart Church) and cemetery existed. The migration was not complete, but among the leavers were Mark Walker and his family. He chose to move to the almost entirely Catholic Sweet Bay about ten miles in the Bay. Economically this was advantageous; he was able to sell lumber he cut on his new grant of land. But no doubt he also had a religious reason – his new home was adjacent to the Catholic cemetery in Sweet Bay (none existed in Tickle Cove) and, newly married, he, his wife and their children would have easy access to a Roman Catholic chapel and school.

It is likely there were Protestants and Catholics who made these moves to religious enclaves with some bitterness. As in Conception Bay, but with a lot fewer incidents, there were some bad feelings between the groups (O'Neill & Hiller 1983; Rowe 1980: 295-301). For example, according to a legend passed to Captain John Russell (born 1906) from his Red Cliff stepfather, in the late 19th century a funeral march by Protestants was halted in front of Sacred Heart Church in Open Hall by the there-predominant Catholics. Because the man had drowned, it was particularly sad. Because he had been an Orangeman, the Orange flag flew. The Catholics who stopped the procession argued the flag showed the Pope strung up by his heels. The fearful Protestants dispatched a message to Red Cliff for reinforcements. But a recent arrival to Open Hall, a Mr. Welch, directly from Ireland, calmed the nerves of his churchmen. It was thought that Welch was a "true" Catholic, unlike the bush-born Open Hallers, and that his interpretation of Orange intentions carried more weight. His intervention allowed the funeral to pass before anything more than words were exchanged (J. Russell 2002).

Such incidents were not common, and nor did they lead to bloodshed, but there was an awareness of tensions. Mrs. Annie Kelly (also née Kelly), a member of the comparatively small Catholic community of Tickle Cove in the 20th century, remembers being a child in the years just after the First World War and staying indoors while the annual parade of Orangemen passed alongside her family's garden on Orangemen's Day, July 12th. In the marches, they paraded their Orange flag to Keels, about five miles to the North. Nothing was said; twentieth-century Catholics were *laissez-faire* about Orangemen (A. Kelly 2002). Throughout Newfoundland, both sides of that religious divide had been shocked by the mid-1880s mayhem, leading to a *modus vivendi* of

tolerance and peace (Rowe 1980: 301). A counter-movement even grew up among many younger people of that era who subscribed to a kind of pan-Britishism that superseded Orangeism.²⁵

Religion turns up in at least one of Walker's songs in a covert way. "The Antis of Plate Cove" is about the 1869 election in which Newfoundland decided not to join with the newly confederated provinces of Canada. It was fought by and large along religious lines, in which Catholics were largely against confederation while Protestants tended to be in favour of it. Newfoundland Orange Lodges were strategically established in this period to encourage a pro-Canadian spirit. The antagonism surrounding Orangeism in Newfoundland was in some measure an antagonism against confederatism (Hiscock 1997b). The oral history of Walker's song tells of two verses that were suppressed because the local priest thought they were too forthright in their condemnation of Protestants (M. Kelly 2002; J. Russell 2002).²⁶ Long prints one of these verses learned from his father, the locally renowned singer Willie Joe Long:

Hurrah for the "Antis" of Plate Cove
And Open Hall, both joined in one;
They painted the Overs like scarlet
And made the Mugeridges run. (1998: 140, fn 6)

(Muggeridge is traditionally pronounced Muckridge.) Long discusses the song in the context of the roving electoral intimidation that was common at the time and that led to the Antis winning the day (p. 130). Where Mark Walker stood in these tensions and near battles is mainly unrecorded but his song indicates he supported the Antis in 1869. This was the default Catholic position. But his song may have gone beyond the default by naming and ridiculing Protestants with too much vituperation, pointedly the Overs being among them.

Folklorists have widely written about the fact that songs can be seen as personal or community property. Further, it is an important element in traditional singing and preserving Newfoundland songs that they can be seen as gender-appropriate (Kodish 1983). They may also be seen as ethnic and religious artifacts, appropriate for performance only in restricted contexts (Goldstein 1991). Oral history among Protestants in Walker's community has it that his family were actually Protestants and that it was his marriage to Mary Downey, a Catholic, that converted him. For all the "social truth" (Mody Boatright's phrase: 1958) in this legend, the historicity is nil: church records researched by Walker family genealogists show clearly he was born and baptised a Catholic. Nonetheless, the song "Tickle Cove Pond" expresses a community life in Tickle Cove and throughout that shore that goes beyond petty religious differences; perhaps it was seen by Protestants as a "Protestant song."

²⁵ See for example, Newfoundland's W. G. Gosling's call for a federal, democratic "Greater British" Empire, in the closing words to his *The Life of Sir Humphrey Gilbert: England's First Empire Builder* (1911: 298). Gosling lived 1863-1930 (Cuff 1984).

²⁶ Ives (1971: 45) tells of a parallel legend of intervention by a priest in the life of one of Lawrence Doyle's songs in Prince Edward Island. Two lines were said to have been subsequently removed for being too explicit.

To start with, Mark Walker, the song-maker, was Catholic, by both birth and marriage. He was raising his children Catholic in a Catholic community some ten miles south of Tickle Cove. The two neighbours he chose to refer to were Protestants. William White was Methodist, an important representative of Methodism in that area, the man who delivered that new religious zeal to Tickle Cove (Lench 1919: 60). William Oldford belonged to the Church of England, as do his descendants in Red Cliff today. William Over was a Methodist, and his family today in Southern Bay belongs to the United Church of Canada, the successor since 1925 to Newfoundland Methodism. Coded into the song was a clear message of ecumenism, or at least religious tolerance, one that would have been clear to contemporary listeners and singers, but which goes over our heads today. In the song, Walker gives his countenance not only to the individuals, but to their "children and wives," and thus to their communities of God. It is an expression of peace in a country that had seen a generation of increasing hatred and violence among different religious groups.

In this way it can be seen as the antithesis of the treason songs that Goldstein has written about (Goldstein 1991). Such a song would have been a very appropriate parting gift to his friends in Tickle Cove when he was leaving to go to Sweet Bay, especially so when, as a younger man, he had written the invective verses of "The Antis of Plate Cove," verses he may have come to regret as he grew older. And indeed the priest who, by legend, asked that the worst of the verses not be sung anymore may have been acting on his behalf.

Is Kit Dead?

Nonetheless, the religious, or sectarian, interpretation of "Tickle Cove Pond" is all but empty today. Instead, other meanings have taken its place. One is the question of the man's affection for his horse and whether she is dead or not. There are two interpretations of this point and they are crucial to the tone that the performers try to convey. One interpretation has her saved. As Ron Hynes said, "Poor creature, she's dead, poor creature, she's gone." That's just a woe-begone expression (Hynes 2002). The Vermont-based trio, Nightingale, whose main singer, Keith Murphy, is from Newfoundland, wrote in their CD liner notes that they chose as a supplementary tune the Irish traditional "Culfadda" to *celebrate* the successful saving of the horse (Nightingale 1997).

For some readers, the line "I'll ne'er get my wood off of Tickle Cove Pond" suggests the horse is alive, but they may find the choice of words distressing or humorous. Folklorist Mark Ferguson told me of speaking to a woman from Bonavista (about twenty miles northeast of Tickle Cove) in the mid-1990s. She laughed at the line as if there were a coded bit of irony in it. Because the horse was so valuable, he could get neighbourly help to get it. But the wood would just have to remain there, and perhaps float away to sea. Indeed, he would never get his wood off the pond. In Anita Best's words:

If you're heating your house, well, boy: you can borrow someone else's horse. But you're not going to get someone else to cut wood for you. That's something you do yourself. It takes a lot of time. It has to cure up for almost a whole year before you can go and get it. You cut it the previous year and you burn it the following year. A lot of time and energy is invested into that pile of wood. (Best 2002)

Ron Hynes changed that line to "my mare" and this change more fully established the man's love for his horse and reduced the appearance of unconcern for the horse's welfare. Kelly Russell remembers that, although the 1978 edition of Doyle's songster was used "as our Bible" in recording the songs for the album Hynes's "Tickle Cove Pond" appeared on, there was no discussion of this change (Russell 2002).

On the other hand, many listeners see the song as bearing its greatest emotional impact *because* of the death of the horse. As one listener said, "And he's after killing the horse – himself!" There are variable textual indications to this effect. For instance, in the text printed in a 1974 songster (Nolan 1974) it is very clear the horse is dead: "I lost me my mare on Tickle Cove Pond" (line 8). In her 2002 recording, Meredith Hall sings "render assistance in all your sad plights" (line 32). Hers is the only recorded version that uses this phrase, suggesting death more strongly than the usual "bad plights."

It is sometimes popularly said that "poor" indicates "dead" in the vernacular speech of many Newfoundlanders. Helen Porter's memoir, *Below The Bridge* (1979) is an example; speaking of her mother's and grandmother's generations of women, "when they talked of the dead it was always 'poor Grace' or 'poor Gladdie', as if the poor was part of the name" (p. 103). Linguist Harold Paddock told me that in his home community of Beaumont, Green Bay, NDB, "poor" used attributively, before the proper noun, "always" meant "dead" (personal communication, 20 May 2002).

But despite its local celebrity, the "dead" usage does not appear in the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English* (Kirwin, Story and Widdowson 1990) because it is common in colloquial speech throughout the English-speaking world.²⁷ Nonetheless, because of its reputation as a localism, it reads as one and the sense drawn can be that the horse is indeed dead. The word "poor" is used five times in the typical forms of the song. At least once it must be seen as not having any sense of meaning "dead" ("to help a poor neighbour"); the other times it may be an indicator. White (1965) alone sings "to help a poor creature," perhaps indicating its death. In any case, readers choose whichever indicator they prefer. The dialogic nature of the song allows for both readings.

Fear of Ice

Wood-cutting was an economic reason for the fairly large-scale movement of families into the deeper parts of Bonavista Bay in the second half of the nineteenth century. It involved spending much of the winter hauling loads of wood from deeper woods to the coves where it could be hauled home or sold to schooners taking it for use in construction, mining and shipbuilding. The use of frozen ponds was central to this economy: "When ponds freeze over, we shorten our runs." Men tried to extend their hauling season as late as they could into the spring when the woods were getting clearer of snow. While pond ice at that time of year was getting "rotten," it was important to haul wood across it until one could not. Often the clearest indication that it was time to stop was the fact that someone had gone through. "Tickle Cove Pond" tells a story that was fairly common along that shore.

²⁷ See *OED*, "poor" sense 6. It usually is used with a proper noun (personal name) rather than with a common noun. But this is a matter of usual form, not exclusive form: see the *OED* citations.

Coded into the song is the locally endemic fear of ice as something, unlike neighbours, one cannot always rely on. Stories are told in the area about many individuals and groups who drowned as a result of going through ice. One eerily parallel story is about the death of Frankie Kelly of Tickle Cove in April 1934. Kelly was known as a song-maker, some say better than Mark Walker, and certainly more of his songs were known to his own generation. John Russell was a friend of Kelly's and was the last to see him alive. It was late in the winter and although Kelly had a load of wood on the other side of the pond, he said the ice was too rotten to go and get it. Nonetheless, he did go and in hauling his load back across the pond without a horse (he did not own one), he went through the ice and drowned. Nearly a lifetime later, this story is still told by Tickle Cove people; in a matter of a few days I heard it from two people (J. Russell 2002; A. Kelly 2002).

To this can be added more contemporary stories of people on snowmobiles or walking across ice and going through to their deaths. People who live in the area tell legends regularly about drowning deaths on ponds, as a result of either travelling over rotten ice, accidentally crossing spring- or river-fed leads, or slipping into an open pond while fishing. A boy was lost in Legge's Arm of Tickle Cove Pond a few years ago (A. Kelly 2002) and, as I write this, in mid-June 2002, a Red Cliff man's body was found at a trout-fishing pond ("Police..." 2002). The song "Tickle Cove Pond" was and remains today a clear cautionary tale and *memento mori* for residents of the area.

Conclusion

The earliest crystallization of the text of "Tickle Cove Pond" was in the limited distribution *Book of Newfoundland* in 1937. Three years later, far more Newfoundlanders came to know the song through Gerald S. Doyle's widely distributed songster. From the second edition in 1940 through every subsequent edition, the song was included. Given the fact that there have been no field recordings of the song, it is not possible for the folklore historian to see back beyond the Doyle and Smallwood texts to an "original" one that Walker may have written. Doyle's books were seen as an encapsulation of Newfoundland song tradition; his texts were treated as the "correct" ones. Even his typographic errors could be treated as correct text.

Ron Hynes's performance, and his musical arrangement by Don Walsh and Kelly Russell, made "Tickle Cove Pond" a newly analyzed semiological text, especially for listeners lacking a direct and historic connection to the lifestyle it portrayed. The new rendition and its semiology allowed the song to rise to the fore of Newfoundland songs in the 1990s. This reanalysis builds on traces and threads of meaning that were in the song all along, and has been able to overshadow certain meanings that may have been present earlier.

What this discussion of meaning in Walker's song underscores is the emergent nature of all the realities of folk song. This song today is a powerful expression of current desires to read a past for Newfoundland suitable to the present. Among others, it expresses a modern, urbane and nature-alienated sensibility about animals, their wisdom and their subservience. We don't know when this song was written but, from an early age, Mark Walker was exposed to many different Newfoundland subcultures, including bourgeois and urbane ones. Perhaps Walker deliberately played these sensibilities up, having – picturesque-fashion – one foot in Tickle Cove, and another,

metaphorically, in his future home in Boston. Its earlier function as an expression of the hard, workaday life of rural people, and of the important routines of wood-getting, is over-shadowed by a new function of indicating how connected to nature earlier Newfoundlanders were, and how complete was their neighbourly love. Ironically, this modern reading effaces an earlier meaning that may have countered widespread neighbourly division.

What the song represented to earlier readers, including its author, we cannot know. But the evidence suggests it had a powerful symbolic value as an expression of neighbourly peace in a time of denominational discord. This meaning, for whatever it was worth then, has now been lost to contemporary readers.

Appendix

Chronologies of Tickle Cove Pond

- 1846 – Mark Walker born in Tickle Cove, Bonavista Bay
- 1869 – Confederation election
- 1873 – Move to Sweet Bay
- 1906 - Emigration from Newfoundland to Massachusetts, USA
- 1924 - Death and burial in Malden, MA.

Printed Texts of "Tickle Cove Pond"

- 1937 - Joe Smallwood, *Book of Newfoundland*
- 1940 - Gerald Doyle, *Old-Time Songs and Poetry of Newfoundland*, 2nd edition
- 1944 - *Newfoundlander* (St. John's)
- 1949 - *Family Herald* (Montreal)
- 1950 - Art Scammell article in *Atlantic Guardian*
- 1955 - Gerald Doyle, *Old-Time Songs of Newfoundland*, 3rd edition
- 1964 - Omar Blondahl, *Newfoundlanders, Sing!*
- 1966 - Gerald Doyle, *Old-Time Songs and Poetry of Newfoundland*, 4th edition
- 1968 - Alan Mills, *Favourite Songs of Newfoundland*
- 1955 - Leo English, *Historic Newfoundland* (first edition; song title mentioned)
- 1955 - Leo English, *Historic Newfoundland* (2nd and subsequent editions)
- 1974 - Dick Nolan, *The Ninth Edition of Newfoundland Songs*
- 1976 - Gerald Doyle, *Old-Time Songs and Poetry of Newfoundland*, 5th edition
- 1995 - Arthur Sullivan, *No Strangers Here*
- 1997 - Eric West, *Sing Around This One...*
- 2000 - Lyle Drake, *We'll Rant and We'll Roar*

Sound recordings of "Tickle Cove Pond"

- ca. 1948 - The Commodore's Quartet (a Gerald S. Doyle production)
- 1951 - Alan Mills, (*Folk Songs of Newfoundland*)
- 1954 - Ed McCurdy (*Homeward Bound*)
- 1956 - Omar Blondahl (*Down to the Sea Again*)
- 1956 - CJON Glee Club (*CJON's Glee Club Sings Newfoundland Folk Songs, II*)
- ca. 1960 - Broadcast by Lew Murphy by CBC radio; later released on LP and CD *Ballads of Land and Sea*
- 1965 - John White (*The Voice of Newfoundland*)
- 1991 - Ron Hynes (on Walsh & Russell, *Another Time*)
- 1993 - Connemara (*The River*)

- 1994 - Nightingale (*The Coming Dawn*)
 1998 - Wakami Wailers (*The River Through the Pines*)
 2001 - Broadcast by Dermot O'Reilly and Fergus O'Byrne for CBN radio
 2001 - Meredith Hall & Bernard Fardy (*My Fond Heart*)

Attributed songs of Mark Walker

1. "The Antis of Plate Cove," is about events in neighbouring towns during the pivotal 1869 general election in which Confederation was the main issue. It lost – much to Walker's glee. The song has enjoyed a new life in recent years as an iconic representation of Newfoundland's pre-Confederation independence. This excerpt is from the text recited by Mark Kelly:

Hurray for the Antis of Plate Cove, that wee little patriot band
 Who used the excursion November to down the Confederate plan. (M. Kelly 2002)

Besides the printed texts noted by Mercer (1979), it also appears in Fowke & Johnson (1978: 78-79). (Mercer mistakenly notes Devine 1912 which does not include this song.) There are at least two archival recordings (Dooley 1987; Burton 1971). It was recorded by Dermot O'Reilly and Fergus O'Byrne (Whelan 1998). An extra verse, said to be suppressed, is discussed in Long (1998: 140, fn 6).

2. "Fanny's Harbour Bawn" is about two men's fight over a girl. Part of Walker's satiric wit is to put the narration in the mouth of the other fellow, who loses. In addition to Mercer's list of thirteen printings, Lehr has a text (pp. 62-63); an archival recording is Burton (1972). A 1926 report from the Bonavista South area says that the words of "Fanny's Harbour Boun" [*sic*] are so well-known, the author felt no need to give them, indicating that the song was in strong oral circulation at the time ("From..." 1926); as Mercer shows, both John Burke and James Murphy published it in the early years of the twentieth century. There are few recorded versions of the song; Taft (1975) lists none. Lew Murphy's *Songs of Land and Sea* may be the only.

3. "Lovely Kitty-Oh" (also known as "Lovely Katie-Oh") is particularly satiric song if the oral history of it is to be believed – it was a parting gift by Walker to the girl who rejected him for another man, and served up by Walker at her wedding. It centres on her infidelity and includes a stanza about the reaction to his song. Lehr's (pp. 12-13) is the only known printing of this song. Guigné (1974: C9989) has an archival recording.

4. "The Race on Tickle Cove Pond" is an account of a contest of rowing speed between two teams, one from Tickle Cove and the other from Red Cliff. In the tradition of moniker songs, it names many local residents, making fun of the brawl that ensued. The manuscript copy in Mark Kelly's possession was acquired from E. James Long, who collated two versions, one in oral tradition in his family, and a printed text ("From..." 1926). That the prize money is given in pounds sterling may give a rough indication of the song's age. Newfoundland switched officially to decimal currency over a period of a few years beginning in 1865 (Riggs 1981).

5. "Labrador Squalls" is about a gale in August 1867 on the Labrador Coast while the author served on the schooners *Ostrich* and *Dreadnought*. This song is known only by a text in the possession of Walker's grandson, Mark Kelly. Not typical of Walker's style, it is written in a simple rhythm and stanzaic form, with no internal rhymes and few assonances.

6. Locally, Walker is said to have written "Down By Jim Long's Stage." It tells of a man tested by his girlfriend's father who tells him they will never marry but who relents when he sees the courter's intentions are good. The only tunes collected with this text are the same as the main "Star of Logy Bay" tune; only very small differences exist between the tunes of the two songs in Doyle 1955: 22 and 59. They have similar stories except that "Down By Jim Long's Stage" has the happy ending "Star of ..." does not have. (In Walker's Kelly family, it is said that he also wrote "Star of Logy Bay" but there is no other clear evidence of it being so.) Mercer notes three printed

texts of "Down By Jim Long's Stage." Archival recordings are lacking: MUNFLA's Song Title Index does not list the song. Nonetheless, the title has been redolent enough to be used as the title of a children's book (Pittman 1997), and to be jokingly mooted as part of a title for a Newfoundland gay porn film ("Going Down on Jim Long's Stage," Guy and Knowling 1998).

7. "The Girls From Sweet Bay" is a satiric song attributed to Mark Walker. Like "Star of Logy Bay," and "Down By Jim Long's Stage" it tells of a man separated from his girlfriend by her parents. The narrator keeps hope but her head is eventually turned by another man. Nonetheless, the narrator finishes with "...the man who enjoys the first bloom of a blossom / Should have the best right to the fruit on the tree." To my knowledge this song is unpublished except for Russell (1997: 69-70) and Martha Warren's website (Warren undated).

8. "Nellie Neil, Me Little Kettle" exists only in a single version (Smallwood 1937: 479). It has been repeated from there on a web site devoted to Bonavista South songs (www.chebucto.ns.ca/Heritage/NGB/Bonavista/Songs/bon-music-idx.html). It has the metrical and rhyming patterns that are seen in most other Walker songs. It is a warm and light-hearted tribute to a young woman who has married well after being courted by a half-dozen other men, most of them named.

9. A single-stanza fragment about a local merchant hiring a Tickle Cove crew to go fishing in the north of Newfoundland was printed in 1926 ("From..." 1926) and reprinted by Long with a change in the merchant's name to reflect historical documents (1998: 24 and p. 43, fn 40). Nothing more is known about this song.

10. "Tickle Cove Pond" or "Kit on the Pond." Its annotation is in the main text of this paper.

11. "Tickle Cove Pond II" is a lament for having left Newfoundland, or at least a reminiscence about it, and especially about the town he was born in, Tickle Cove. Walker wrote the song in Boston where, after his death, his family members knew and sang it. It was published in *The Trinitarian* ("From..." 1926) but was mainly unknown otherwise. When one of Walker's Newfoundland grandsons, Sam Kelly, visited the family in the 1950s or '60s, he brought a copy of the song back to his brother Mark Kelly (M. Kelly 2002).

12. Only the title is known of "Gains I Owe in Many Lands." It is referred to in the 1926 article probably written by Frankie Kelly ("From...." 1926).

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