



“To subvert the tyranny of our execerable Government, to break the connection with England, the never failing source of all our political evils and to assert the independence of my country - these were my objects.

“To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of all past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishman in place of the denominations of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter, these were my means.”

WOLFE TONE

IN
SONG AND STORY

On October 18th 1971, Wolfe Tone attended a meeting in Belfast which inaugurated the Society of United Irishmen. Their purpose at this time was Parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation. However, the then Prime Minister - Pitt, was forced to make major concessions in 1793. These concessions were enough to buy off many of the Catholic leaders and Pitt was able to work towards his own solution i.e. Union with England. The result was a strengthening of the British Government position, but also the United Irishmen were re-organised on a revolutionary basis.

From then on they sought French help in establishing an Independent Irish Republic. At this time Tone became firm friends with Thomas Russell, Thomas Addis Emmet and William Drennan. It was these along with others who had earlier formed a Radical club, and with the French Revolution in progress Tone and his friends and many others were influenced into becoming firstly democrats and then Revolutionaries. The lesson to draw here is that neither Ireland nor England exists in a vacuum. Developments outside have and will continue to have far reaching effects on these islands.

Theobald Wolfe Tone was born in Dublin on 20th June, 1763, the son of a coach painter. Middle class by origin he found his roots amongst the Irish peasants and artisans. Tone's greatness was that he first gave expression to Irish Republicanism. He also clearly saw the need for unity of the people and recognised the possibilities of a successful armed rebellion at that particular time due to the weakness of the ruling class. The quote on the front of this pamphlet has even greater significance today. Sectarianism has taken a dreadful toll amongst the Irish working people and it is only when we have a united working class that we can look forward to a new future of independence and SOCIALISM.

"The most important precondition for a revolution is not the heroism of the revolutionaries or how well organised they are, but is the inability of the old ruling class to rule any longer in the old way."



A FENIAN BALLAD

[This poignant street ballad, enshrining a tragic fact of Irish life, is said to have been written by O'Donovan Rossa].

Come all ye brave United Men, who'd right your country's wrong,
I'll sing to you a verse or two, which won't detain you long.
In old Iveleary by the Hills my youthful days passed by;
The Famine came and filled the graves - I saw my father die.

The bailiff with the "notice" came - the bit of ground was gone -
I saw the rooftree in a flame - the crowbar work was done.
With neither house nor bed nor bread, the Workhouse was my doom
And on my jacket soon I read: "The Union of Macroom."

My mother died of a broken heart; my uncle from the town
Brought for her a horse and cart and buried her in Gleown.
I joined the "Red Coats" then - mo leir! what would my father say?
And I was sent in one short year on service to Bombay.

I thought to be a pauper was the greatest human curse,
But fighting in a robber's cause - I felt it ten times worse.
I helped to plunder and enslave those tribes of India's sons;
And many a sultry day I spent blowing Sepoys from our guns.

I told those sins to Father Ned - the murder and booty;
They were no sins for me, he said, I only did my duty;
And when that "duty" there was done, a journey home I made
To find my friends all dead and gone; I joined the Pope's Brigade.

I got but medals on my breast for serving in this campaign;
And next I'm found in the far, far West, a-soldiering again,
With famous Captain Billy O I joined the Fenian Band,
And swore one day to strike a blow to free my native land.

Back in this down-trod Isle again, where vultures drink our blood,
Friends are scattered, starved or slain - I'm told I'm cursed by God;
That I could swear my life-long days to serve from Pole to Pole
In any other cause but this with safety to my soul!

No sin to kill for English greed in some far foreign clime,
How can it be that patriot love in Ireland is a crime?
How can it be by God's decree I'm cursed, outlawed and banned
Because I swore one day to free my trampled native land?

THE PATRIOT MAID



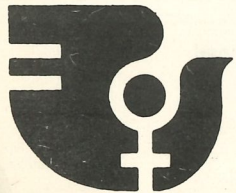
[Dedicated to Betsy Grey, the patriot maid who fought and fell with the Insurgent forces in Co. Down, Ulster in 1798]

An Irish girl in heart and soul,
I love the dear old land;
I honour those who in her cause
Lift voice or pen or hand.
And may I live to see her free
From foreign lord and knave,
But Heaven forbid I'd ever be
The mother of a slave.

God bless the men who take their stand
In Ireland's patriot host;
I'd give the youth my heart and hand
Who serves his country most;
And if he fell, I'd rather lie
Beside him in the grave
Than wed a wealthy loon and be
The mother of a slave.

Thro' many a blood-red age of woe
Our Nation's heart has bled;
But still she makes her tyrants know
Her spirit is not dead.
God bless the men who for her sake
Their live and genius gave;
God bless the mothers of those sons,
They nursed no dastard slave!

Some on the scaffold place of doom
For loving Ireland died;
And others to the dungeon - gloom
Are torn from our side,
But God the Just, who ne'er designed
His image for a slave,
Will give our country might and mind
And raise the true and brave.



A SONG OF THE NORTH

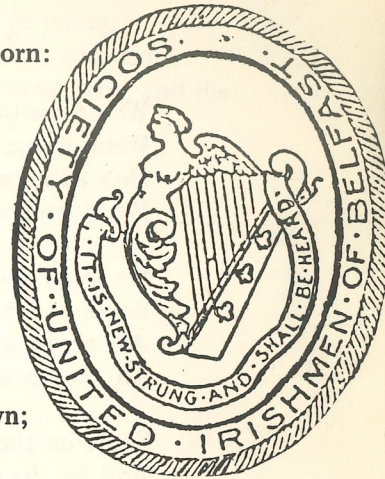
[Air: "The Croppy Boy."]

I sing a song of the Northern Land,
Where the young Republic was bred and born:
Where men of all creed joined hand in hand
To meet the Sasanach might with scorn;
Where heroes fought and where martyrs died
For Ireland's honour and Ireland's weal;
Where faith is stronger than England's pride,
And love more lasting than English steel!

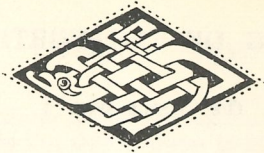
Antrim and Down and Donegal;
Cavan, Fermanagh and green Tyrone;
Derry, Monaghan, Armagh - we love them all
For the tales they tell us of days long flown;
For the songs they sing us of Ninety-Eight;
Of Orr, McCracken, and brave Munro;
Of Hope, and Russell, and Betsy Grey;
And a thousand others who faced the foe!

From proud Cave Hill up to Breffni's vales,
From the eastern billows to Inishowen,
The breezes are telling a hundred tales
Of the ones who battled to hold their own;
Of boys like Neilson, the young and brave;
Of maids, and mothers, and manly men.
Of priest and parson who gladly gave
Their lives, that the land might be free again!

Men of the North! no shame is yours;
You are still unbeaten by greed and hate;
The hope of centuries aye endures,
And the faith that was flaming in Ninety-Eight.
The day is dawning when Northern men
Shall sweep the foemen from sea to sea;
And songs of joy will be sung again
At Northern firesides - in Ireland free!



BRIAN NA BANBAN



THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD

Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight? Who blushes at the name?
 When cowards mock the patriot's fate who hangs his head for shame?
 He's all a knave or half a slave who slights his country thus:
 But a true man, like you, man, will fill your glass with us.

We drink the memory of the brave, the faithful and the few -
 Some lie far off beyond the wave some sleep in Ireland, too;
 All, all are gone, but still lives on the fame of those who died;
 All true men, like you, men, remember them with pride.

Some on the shores of distant lands their weary hearts have laid,
 And by the stranger's heedless hands their lonely graves were made;
 But, though their clay be far away beyond the Atlantic foam,
 In true men, like you, men, their spirit's still at home.

The dust of some is Irish earth - among their own they rest;
 And the same land that gave them birth has caught them to her breast;
 And we will pray that from their clay full many a race may start,
 Of true men, like you, men, to act as brave a part.

They rose in dark and evil days to right their native land;
 They kindled here a living blaze that nothing shall withstand;
 Alas! that Might can vanquish Right - they fell and passed away;
 But true men, like you, men, are plenty here today.

Then here's their memory - may it be for us a guiding light
 To cheer our strife for liberty and teach us to unite!
 Through good and ill, be Ireland's still, though sad as theirs your fate:
 And true men, be you men, like those of Ninety-Eight.

JOHN KELLS INGRAM

HENRY JOY

An Ulsterman I am proud to be, from Antrim's Glens I've come,
 And although I've laboured by the sea, I have followed flag and drum
 I have heard the martial tramp of men, I have watched them fight and die
 And it's well do I remember, when I followed Henry Joy.

I pulled my boat up from the sea and I hid my sails away,
 I hung my nets on a greenwood tree, and I scanned the moonlit bay,
 The Boys were out, and the Redcoats too; I kissed my wife goodbye,
 And in the shade of the greenwood glade - sure I followed Henry Joy.

In Antrim Town the tyrant stood, he tore our ranks with ball,
 But with a cheer and a pike to clear, we swept them o'er the wall.
 Our pikes and sabres flashed that day, we won, but lost, ah! why?
 No matter lads, I fought beside, and shielded Henry Joy.

Ah! boys, for Ireland's cause we fought, for her and home we bled,
 Though pikes were few still our hearts beat true, and five to one lay dead.
 But many a lassie mourned her lad, and mother mourned her boy;
 For youth was strong in that gallant throng, who followed Henry Joy.

In Belfast Town they built a tree, and the Redcoats mustered there;
 I watched him come as the beat of the drum rolled out from the barrack square:
 He kissed his sister and went aloft, he bade a last goodbye:
 My God! he died, sure I turned and cried, they had murdered Henry Joy.





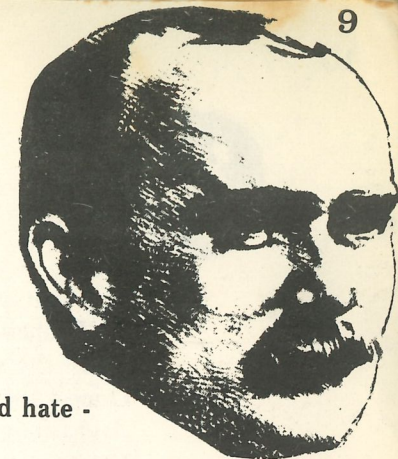
B O D E N S T O W N

The lush grass hides forgotten graves,
 The elders are abloom
 An ivied wall stands sentinel
 Beside a lonely tomb.
 And here, while summer holds her sway,
 Linnet and blackbird throng,
 And blend their sweetest songs o'er him
 Who loved the battle song.

No gleaming marble rises tall
 Above that sacred dust,
 But simple words on modest stone
 Tell of his freedom lust.
 Enough - they bear his message on;
 Methinks could he but know,
 No other monument he'd crave
 While Ireland's flag lies low.

Could he the grave's deep silence break,
 Not sculptured stone he'd ask -
 But men and guns, and gleaming swords,
 To consummate his task.
 Then let us in this holy place
 Kneel down and breathe a prayer -
 A vow to carry on the work
 Of him who slumbers there.

MAEVE CAVANAGH McDOWELL



A REBEL SONG

[Words by : James Connolly]

Come workers, sing a rebel song, a song of love and hate -
 Of love unto the lowly and of hatred to the great,
 The great who trod our fathers down, who steal our children's bread,
 Whose hands of greed are stretched to rob the living and the dead.

[Chorus]
 Then sing our rebel song, as we proudly sweep along,
 To end the age-long tyranny that makes for human tears.
 Our march is nearer done with each setting of the sun,
 And the tyrant's might is passing with the passing of the years.

We sing no more of wailing, and no songs of sighs or tears,
 High are our hopes, and stout our hearts, and banished all our fears;
 Our flag is raised above us, so that all the world may see,
 'Tis Labour's faith and Labour's arm alone can Labour free.

- Chorus -

Out of the depths of misery we march with hearts of flame.
 With wrath against the rulers false who wreck our manhood's name;
 The serf who licks the tyrant's rod may bend forgiving knee,
 The slave who breaks his slav'ry's chain a wrathful man must be.

- Chorus -

Our army marches onward, with its face towards the dawn,
 In trust secure in that one thing the slave may lean upon;
 The might within the arm of him, who, knowing freedom's worth
 Strikes home to banish tyranny from off the face of earth.

- Chorus -

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TONE'S GRAVE

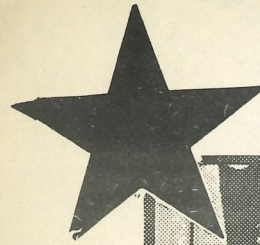
In Bodenstown churchyard there is a green grave,
 And wildly around it the winter winds rave;
 Small shelter I ween are the ruined walls there
 When the storm sweeps down on the plains of Kildare.
 Once I lay on that sod - it lies over Wolfe Tone -
 And thought how he perished in prison alone,
 His friends unavenged and his country unfreed -
 "Oh, bitter," I said, "is the patriot's meed,"

"For in him the heart of a woman combined
 With a heroic life and a governing mind -
 A martyr for Ireland, his grave has no stone -
 His name seldom named, and his virtues unknown."
 I was woke from my dream by the voices and tread
 Of a band who came into the home of the dead;
 They carried no corpse, and they carried no stone,
 And they stopped when they came to the grave of Wolfe Tone.

There were students and peasants, the wise and the brave,
 And an old man who knew him from cradle to grave,
 And children who thought me hard-hearted; for they
 On that sanctified sod were forbidden to play.
 But the old man, who saw I was mourning there, said:
 "We come, sir, to weep where young Wolfe Tone is laid,
 And we're going to raise him a monument, too -
 A plain one, yet fit for the simple and true."

My heart overflowed, and I clasped his old hand,
 And I blessed him, and blessed every one of his band;
 "Sweet, sweet 'tis to find that such faith can remain
 To the cause and the man so long vanquished and slain."
 In Bodenstown churchyard there is a green grave,
 And freely around it let winter winds rave -
 Far better they suit him - the ruin and the gloom -
 Till Ireland, a nation, can build him a tomb.

THOMAS DAVIS



LIFT UP THE PEOPLE'S BANNER

Lift up the People's banner, now trailing in the dust;
 A million hands are ready to guard the sacred trust.
 With steps that never falter, and hearts that grow more strong,
 Till victory ends our warfare, we sternly march along.

Through ages of oppression we bore a heavy load,
 While others reaped the harvest from seeds the people sowed
 Down in the earth we burrowed, or fed the furnace heats:
 We felled the mighty forests, we built the mighty fleets.

But after bitter ages of hunger and despair,
 The slave has snapped his fetters and bids his foes beware.
 We will be slaves no longer, the Nations soon shall know
 That all who live must labour, that all who reap must sow.

So on we march to battle with souls that shall not rest
 Until the world God gave us is by the world possessed;
 And, filled with perfect manhood, in beauty it shall move,
 One heart, one home, one nation, whose king and lord is love.

[reprinted with kind co-operation of Mr. D. Kelleher]



THE INTERNATIONAL

Arise! ye starvelings from your slumbers;
Arise ye criminals of want
For reason in revolt now thunders,
And at last ends the age of cant.
Now away with all superstitions,
Servile masses, arise! arise!
We'll change forthwith the old conditions
And spurn the dust to win the prize

[Chorus]

Then comrades, come rally,
And the last fight let us face
The International Unites the human race.
Then comrades come rally,
And the last fight let us face..
The International Unites the human race.

No saviours from on high deliver,
No trust have we in prince or peer:
Our own right hand the chains must shiver,
Chains of hatred, of greed and fear.
Ere the thieves will dis-gorge their booty,
And to all give a happier lot
Each at his forge must do his duty
And strike the iron when it's hot.

- Chorus -

We peasants, artisans and others
Enrolled among the sons of toil
Let's claim the earth henceforth for brothers,
Drive the indolent from the soil.
On our flesh long has fed the raven,
We've too long been the vulture's prey:
But now farewell the spirit craven,
The dawn brings in a brighter day.

- Chorus [twice] -

Title: Wolfe Tone in Song and Story

Organisation: Communist Party of Ireland Student Group

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