

Johnny Patterson

The Rambler From Clare

The Life Of The 19th Century Irish Circus Clown

By Harry Bradshaw

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The majority of our popular emigrant songs were written in the latter part of the last century in the wake of the mass exodus which followed the famine years. Some of the more maudlin still retain their popularity at misty-eyed Irish American gatherings. But perhaps the most enduring were written by a Clare born comedian cum circus clown. His songs were gay and witty and retain their freshness a hundred years later. The songs were composed by Johnny Patterson, the self-styled rambler from Clare.

John Francis Patterson was born in the year 1840¹ in his father's roadside forge house in Kilbarron, on the outskirts of the village of Feakle in County Clare. His father, Francis Patterson,² a nailer-gunsmith, was one of a family of nailers (blacksmiths) in the area, originally coming from the North of Ireland. Johnny's mother died after the birth of her fourth child and within a year his father also died, causing the orphaned Patterson children to be put in the care of relatives. The two girls were sent to Killaloe, the younger son Frank was taken by an O'Houlihan family in Feakle, and the 3 year old Johnny was sent to the home of his uncle Mark, a nailer in the nearby town, Ennis.³

Following family tradition, Johnny was apprenticed to the nailer's trade, but as the boy showed a great liking for music, his uncle set him on the road to becoming a musician by enrolling him in the army as a drummer boy at 14. There were about 30,000 soldiers in Ireland at the time, scattered in posts all over the country. The most likely regiment for Johnny's army service as a drummer boy was the 63rd Foot, an infantry regiment based in the nearby city of Limerick.⁴

As a young boy growing up Johnny had seen the worst effects of the famine of 1847 in his town. The scenes of poverty, misery and emigration made a deep impression on his mind and in years to come were to provide inspiration for many of his songs. But his childhood was not all unhappiness for later he was to write a song about his youthful days in Ennis, and a shop known locally as a meeting place for the boys and girls of the town, "*The Stone Outside Dan Murphy's Door*":

*There's a sweet garden spot in our mem'ry,
It's the place we were born and reared;
'Tis long years ago since we left it,
But return there we will if we're spared.
Our friends and companions of childhood
Would assemble each night near a store,
Round Dan Murphy's shop and how often we've sat
On the stone outside Dan Murphy's door.*

Because of his army band training, Johnny had become a competent musician and was an expert on the piccolo and drums.⁵ However on the completion of 5 years service, he looked for a way of leaving. His problem was solved when the circus of



John Swallow came to town. He got a job in the circus band, bought himself out of his regiment for £20, and joined up with the circus.

It was the custom at the time with travelling shows to have benefit performances, at which certain members of the company received all the takings to boost their earnings and at the end of a Cork engagement, Swallow gave one for the band. One of the bandsmen was asked to do a solo act as a novelty, and Johnny volunteered to tell some jokes and sing songs in the ring. The audience loved it and shouted for more. The circus boss watched the act and realised its potential. Next morning the young Johnny was summoned to John Swallow's caravan and offered a job as a clown. Johnny accepted and signed a two-year contract, which included two benefit performances, and was to be billed as *The Irish Singing Clown*. One of the other acts was James and Selena Hickey, a brother and sister bareback riding duo from Scotland who, being in the same age group as Johnny, became good friends and this encouraged him in his new role.⁶

During the following two seasons with Swallows he experimented with his new act. He discarded the accepted costume of the circus clown to wear instead a neat tweed outfit with shamrocks embroidered on the sleeves and legs and a Celtic harp on his chest. Knee length white stockings, a cone shaped hat and a drooping handlebar moustache completed his costume. Johnny's aim was to create a new style of clowning, appealing to the audience through Irish songs and wit, and although the people were at a low ebb from the effects of the famine and emigration, he maintained they had an inbuilt sense of humor and a readiness to laugh.

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When the show arrived in a town, Johnny would inquire what the local news was, who the local "characters" were, and by the evening's performance would have composed a rhyme or story. Finding suitable songs hard to get, he began to write his own. One of his first songs was "The Roving Irish Boy":

*I am a roving Irish boy, I've seen some ups and
downs sirs,
So to satisfy my mind, I've turned to be a
clown, sirs.
I was born in the County Clare; next door to
Tipperary,
Where they'd made a traitor stare with a clout
of a shillellah.⁷*

Johnny spoke fluent Irish and mixed colloquial expressions in Irish and English into a blend understood and appreciated by the people. Many of his songs of this period have been lost but a remaining example, "The Dingle Puck Goat," gives an idea of his style:⁸

*He's bate all the bailiffs, the Maguls and the
Caliphs,
All the shulers and rulers from Cork to Bagdad,
He'd made them cut capers to put in the
papers,
With one puck from his horn, he would drive
them all mad.
For that bright Saxon shilling he never was willing
Still he'd go to the polls for ould Ireland to vote,
For a fight ne'er relaxin' he was there for the 'axin
That warlike old buko, the Dingle Puck Goat.*

Swallows eventually left Ireland and Johnny continued his act with Batty's and then Risarelli's circuses. In 1867 he appeared at The Theatre, Mary Street, Cork, with the Pablo Fanque circus.⁹ Pablo Fanque (a negro rope dancer who's real name was William Darby) offered the rising clown an engagement in Liverpool. Johnny sailed for Liverpool in 1869 where he found his old friends James and Selena Hickey booked on the same bill. By the end of the season, Johnny and Selena had fallen in love and married in Liverpool.¹⁰ Around this time he composed one of his most successful songs, "The Garden Where The Praties Grow":

*Have you even been in love boys, or did you ever feel
the pain,
I'd rather be in gaol myself than be in love again.
Though the girl I loved was beautiful, I'd have you all to
know
That I met her in the garden where the praties grow.*

In 1870 the Patterson's first child, Bridget, was born, and in the following seasons the Patterson family played with shows all over England. 1872 saw them with Lord George Sanger's circus, but after the birth of their second daughter, Nora, they returned home to work in Ireland.¹¹ In 1875 Johnny was clown with Powell and Clarke's circus and while returning to the circus field after the mid-day parade through the streets of Killarney, a wire was given to him telling that Selena, who had remained in the winter base in Belfast, had given birth to a son. The delighted father bought up all the seats for the matinee and brought the entire company on a boat trip on the lakes of Killarney to celebrate the event. The child was named Johnny Junior. That night, June 1st, 1875, he added an additional verse to "The Garden Where The Praties Grow":

*Now her parents they consented and we're blessed with
children three*

*Two girls just like their Mammy, and a boy the image of me,
I'll train up the children in the way that they should go
And I'll never forget the garden where the praties grow.¹²*

By the age of 35, Johnny was a national success. A critic said: "Endowed with the gift of repartee and a singing voice designed to bring about audience participation, he could hold audiences in his hands, making them laugh or cry. He had the test of a real clown, pathos on the verge of laughter, humour on the verge of tears."

American circuses had long realised the audience potential that existed among the Irish emigrant population and were always on the lookout for new talent. Word of Johnny's act reached Cooper and Bailey's circus and an agent was sent to engage him. Realising that an opportunity like this might never present itself again, he signed a one year contract. It is not clear what relationship existed between him and his wife at this stage, but on his departure for America, the three children were put in the care of his sister Betty, now married in Killaloe, while Selena continued her own circus career.¹³ So in 1876, Johnny set out to conquer America. Writing what must have been one of the first advertising jingles, he wrote the now forgotten "Cunard Line":

*On the 17th of March which is known as Patrick's Day,
From out the River Mersey the "Batavia" sailed away;
We first put in at Queenstown for passengers and the mail,
Then our ship she slewed around and for America did sail.*

For would be emigrants he concluded with the advice:

*Now I'll give advice to all my friends who think of leaving
home,*

*To travel by the Cunard Line when ere they wish to roam;
For safety and civility I'm sure they take the shine,
Oh, there's no boat half so jolly as the Cunard Line.¹⁴*

How lucky Johnny must have considered himself as he sailed to America as a comfortable cabin passenger when he could so easily have been numbered among the thousands of his countrymen who made the same journey under sadder conditions as destitute emigrants, and he now composed an emigrant song which soon became popular all over America, "Goodbye Johnny Dear."

On landing in America, Johnny quickly adapted to the faster pace of life and realised that he needed that extra something, which would make his act stand out from the countless others on the market. The stage Irishman was emerging at this time but Johnny would not change his act. While prepared to laugh at himself as an Irishman, he wanted to show there was something deeper in the Irish, a sharp native wit, a keen sense of humour, and a musical appreciation. He recalled a song he had learned as a boy and adapted it as his signature tune. The song "The Rambler From Clare"^{14A} was an old ballad dating from the rising of 1798, but it suited him perfectly and he was billed in America as *Johnny Patterson, The Rambler From Clare*.¹⁵

Cooper and Bailey's Great London Circus had joined forces with Sanger's Menagerie to make up one of the biggest touring shows in America. Even the biggest shows Johnny had worked on at home seemed tiny in comparison. Undaunted, Johnny rose to the occasion and was an immediate success, especially in predominantly Irish areas. The critic of the *Miners Journal* passed over the show's attractions and wrote in his column:

Cooper and Bailey's is the greatest show on earth but the most wonderful feature of the show is something, which years ago was abandoned as unattainable, a clown with sufficient nerve and brains to be original. They have found this "Rara Avis" and his name is Johnny Patterson; he is

the best clown to invade this region for many years.¹⁶

His success was assured and his contract renewed for a second season during which he appeared before packed houses in Gilmore's Garden¹⁷ (Madison Square Gardens), New York. The *New York Clipper* reported: "What made Patterson so unique a figure among the clowns of his day was his spontaneity of wit and his fresh and unconventional humour."

Johnny kept up a prolific output of songs such as *Bridget Donahue*, *A Typical Irishman*, *The Hat My Father Wore*, and *Old Ireland is the Country I was born in*.

The *St. Louis Democrat* commented: "It remained for Johnny Patterson, the noted humorist and vocalist, to eclipse any other clown seen in St. Louis. His song *Bridget Donahue* has a catchy air and will no doubt be hummed by every boy in the city before the close of the week."¹⁸

At the end of his second season, Johnny decided to remain in America. Some of his many engagements in the following years were:

1877 Tony Pastor's Theatre.

1878 He toured with Howes Circus and played the Theatre Comique, New York. The publishing house of DeWitt published a book of his songs and jokes.

1879 Saw him at the Theatre Olympic, Brooklyn.

1880 He toured with The Great Australian Circus, played the New York Aquarium and then joined the John H. Murray New and Best Show.¹⁹ To make his act even more Irish, he bought an old set of Uilleann pipes and was soon a competent player, delighting audiences with traditional Irish airs and versions of his songs, combining the rather unorthodox sound of Uilleann pipes and circus band.

At the height of his success, sad news reached Johnny from home. His younger daughter, Nora, had joined her mother's show and had been killed in an accident involving an elephant.²⁰ But despite being separated from his family, he could not leave the glamour and wealth he found in America. For consolation he turned to alcohol. In 1881,²¹ he signed a contract with the John B. Doris Interocean Show, part of Sells Brothers Circus. The *Chicago Times* became an admirer and its columnist wrote with stage Irish gusto: "Patterson is a broth of a boy with a rich tuneful brogue that is pleasant to the ear, he is one of the professionals in that line and has not permitted himself to get into a rut, he is a bright companionable fellow, full of anecdote and native wit. Americans admire him and his countrymen have cause to be proud of him."

His output of new songs continued: *Barney Hare*, *A Good Roarin' Fire*, *Shake Hands With Your Uncle Dan*, *Only A Clown*, *My Love She's Gone Away*, *Cincinnati in the State of Oho Ho*, and his recently rediscovered homesick ballad, "Castles in the Air":

*This world is all a bubble, no matter where we go
There's nothing here but trouble, hardship, toil and woe,
Go where we will, do what we may, we are never free
from care,*

*And at best this world is but a castle in the air.
And yet each being loves the land where he sported as
a child,*

*The very savage loves his plain, his woods and prairies
wild,*

*And I, with a true Irish heart, still wish in Ireland there
To sit among her groves and build my Castles In The Air.²²*

By the time he was 45, Johnny was finding it hard to keep up



the pace of American Circus life, so after an absence of 9 years he decided to return home. He had accumulated a lot of money and, before leaving, was presented with a diamond studded brooch shaped as a harp, in appreciation of his clowning and songwriting.²³ Perhaps the critique that gave him most satisfaction was the one written by the *New York Dispatch*:

The songs written by Patterson are full of real Irish humour, and unlike many other so called delineators of Irish character, he tries to elevate his fellow countrymen in the eyes of the public, rather than degrade them.

Back in Ireland in 1885, Johnny was reunited with his family and he bought a house at 77 Corporation Street, Belfast, where his wife Selena was based. Johnny was still a big name in Ireland despite his absence. He planned to put his own circus on the road, but in the meantime joined Lloyd's Mexican Circus.²⁴ He now had star quality about him and lived up to his reputation. A visitor to one of Lloyd's venues noted, "The Irish clown from New York, in the midst of all, self satisfied, bland, and smoking a large cigar." He was also drinking heavily but always paced himself.²⁵ A colleague said: "It was customary for Patterson to have a glass of good Irish whiskey at breakfast and this continued in lesser amounts for most of the day." He was never fully inebriated, but habitually mellow and good natured.²⁶ However there were exceptions. Circus owner James Lloyd wrote in his biography an account of the following incident which occurred in Cookstown:

"Mr. Patterson has been engaged as the only and original Irish clown by the Great London Circus for the season 1878. His Song Books are for sale in every city in the country, and are replete with the very best character of Irish and American songs and ballads."

—*New York Sunday Dispatch*, quoted in the Preface to *Johnny Patterson's "Great London Circus" Songster* (NY: Clinton T. De Witt, 1878)

"Certainly the most original of clowns is Johnny Patterson, an Irishman who never tires of singing in praise of his native land, and whose song, 'I'll Meet Her in the Garden Where the Praties Grow,' is becoming one of the most popular refrains of the day."

—*Evening Telegram* (New York), 28 November 1877

"Johnny Patterson, the Irish clown, is assuredly one of the features. He is funny, principally because he is original. Neither does Mr. Patterson endeavor to cultivate success at the expense of his nationality, for he warbles of the glories of his native [land] and with the gusto of one who is proud of the Emerald Isle."

—*Daily News* (New York), 22 November 1877

"Mr. Patterson, the Irish clown, who recently made such a favorable impression at the Great London Circus, has appeared at the Comique where he has been one of the many attractions of that favorite resort. Mr. Patterson, who is a native of the County Clare, is one of the best specialists in his line of the profession."

—*The Irish American* (New York), 19 January 1878

Patterson got drunk and went into the ring to do his act, during which he began to run me down and told the audience that I was a Protestant and ought not to be in Ireland. Those of the clown's faith got up from their seats, and were halfway into the ring when I asked Patterson what was the cause of all this. I told the audience I engaged Patterson from America and he was earning £18 a week, so he was not doing bad by me. I stood firm and told the audience that they had not paid their money for this unseemly conduct. The show continued. After Patterson had sung his songs and left the ring, I said to him, "Johnny, I never thought you'd treat me as you have done after being such good friends." He apologised for his behaviour and as he had now sobered up, I asked him to do me a favour. "Sure, Mr. Lloyd," he said, so at my request he went back into the ring and apologised to the audience.²⁷

During March of the following season, 1886, Fred Ginnett's circus, playing at Earlsfort Terrace Dublin, proudly advertised "the world renowned Patterson"²⁸ while at the end of the month, Johnny played a week's engagement at Dan Lowrey's Star Variety Theatre (now the Olympia) billed as *The Famous Hibernian Clown and Irish Piper*.²⁹ He was then booked as principal clown for Powell and Clarke's Great Paragon Circus which was touring Ireland. This was a big show, with 130 horses, 35 carriages, elephants, camels, a staff of 120 and a big top which could accommodate 7,000. Having learnt much from American showmanship, Johnny set about telling his public of his plans by placing bill posters throughout the country, boldly announcing:

To the people of Ireland, countrymen, it gives me great pleasure to know that I have been nominated by Messrs.

Powell and Clarke to be clown of their Paragon Circus. It also gives me great pleasure to know that I remain another season in the land of my birth, ere I depart for the land of my adoption. It was my intention to start my own circus, but I arrived at the conclusion that if I did, it should be in a small way and the time has arrived when the weak must give way to the strong and small circuses be a thing of the past. Some of my "friends" say the reason I was such a success in America is because I am Irish. That is not so. Every nation in the world is represented in the American circus, but Americans love originality and something that is racy.³¹

The show opened in Belfast in April and played the main Northern towns before heading South. On June 10³² news reached them that fierce sectarian street riots had broken out in Belfast on the previous night and seven people had been killed. Johnny feared for the safety of his family because their home was close-by to where the riots started, in the docks area. The show moved on to Wicklow village, Baltinglass, on June 27th, where Johnny received a wire informing him that his wife Selena had died of consumption in the Belfast work house.³³ There are no records to show what circumstances brought her to the workhouse. In the tradition of the circus the show went on and nobody in the audience that night knew of the contents of the telegram. The two children were sent to his sister's home in Killaloe and Johnny continued the season.³⁴

During the Summer, the show crossed the path of a small competitor, Keeley's Circus, owned by an Australian, Joe Keeley. He had previously run a circus called Lovett Keeley and Ohmy. A description of Keeley's circus tells us, "It was not a big show, 12

wagons, 20 horses and a one pole tent. Keeley acted as proprietor, tentmaster and ringmaster."³⁵ Johnny briefly met Keeley, but by the end of the season he had made a big decision, he would not return to America. Instead, he presented himself at Keeley's Winter Quarters in the Northern town of Lisnaskea, with a proposition to become his partner and star attraction. Keeley readily agreed, for business had been bad that season. In Middletown, his sharp shooter, Harry Lyons, had accidentally shot dead one of the audience during his act, resulting in Lyons' arrest and the public shunning the show.³⁶

1887 saw Keeley and Patterson's circus on the road. Johnny's 12 year old son wanted to become a circus artist and was brought along to learn the business. Johnny's name, as expected, attracted the customers and business boomed. In the Spring, the show visited the small Co. Westmeath town of Castlepollard where Johnny stayed in Hugh Coghlan's Hotel.³⁷ There he met a young waitress named Bridget Murray, described as "a strapping fine girl in her early twenties, above the average height, dark complexion and a wealth of black hair."³⁸ Johnny invited her to the show and when he saw her that night in a ring side seat, he sang to her a slightly changed version of his song "Bridget Donahue":

*Bridget don't know who, I really do love you,
Although I'm in America, to you I will be true,
So Bridget don't know who, I'll tell you what I'll do,
If you take the name of Patterson then I'll take don't know who.*³⁹

The season continued with good business. In July, Johnny's daughter Bridget, now 17, married Mathew Tuohy, a Latin teacher from Feakle, Johnny's birthplace.⁴⁰ The couple settled in Killaloe, Co. Clare. Through the rest of the year, Johnny corresponded with the other Bridget and when the show called at Castlepollard the following year, they were married on April 11th in St. Michael's church.^{41 & 42}

In 1889, Wehmans, the New York publishers, issued their *Irish Song Book* which contained several of Patterson's compositions.⁴³ His prolific output of songs continued with "The ould turf fire" which like most of his songs mirrored his real life with a little poetic licence. The 3rd verse makes reference to his new winter base in Co. Fermanagh:

*So I've got a little house and land as "nate" as you could see,
You'd never meet the likes of them this side of Lisnaskea,
I've no piano in the room, no pictures on the wall,
But I'm happy and contented in my little Marble Hall.*⁴⁴

Early in the season the show visited Belfast where Johnny was offered an extra engagement at the top rate of £20. There was one condition, he would have to wear an embroidered Union Jack on his costume to pacify the political feelings of the audience. He refused to change from his green outfit with the Celtic Harp and declined the engagement. This led to a lot of bitterness as he was well known and respected by all factions in Belfast.

Johnny was worried about the political situation that existed in the country, as the Parnell issues were the talk of the day. He came to the conclusion that the only way for the country to go forward was to unite behind Parnell so he became a committed supporter. At the height of his Belfast controversy he reckoned the time had come to make a stand for his convictions, thus taking a step which was to prove fatal. He wrote a political song which called on Irishmen, Loyalist and Nationalist, to forget their differences and to work together through industry and full employment to build their country. He titled the song "Do Your



Brendán Breathnach/Irish Traditional Music Archive

*Best For One Another.*⁴⁵ It was never published, a couple of disjointed lines are all that remain of it today.

The circus continued on it's way through the season of 1889, but business started to decline. Joe Keeley, like Johnny, was a heavy drinker which caused problems, as later described by one of the artists:

Business was none too good, there seemed to be bad feelings all through the show, bosses, artists, band, and even tentmen seemed unsettled. When in drink, Keeley was generally to be found asleep in the horse tent, while Patterson on the other hand stopped at the best hotel in town, where he would be feted by all and sundry, and would come on in his buggy and trotting cob next morning late, sometimes too late for the matinee. Keeley would have two or three weeks of these "do's" at a time, then he would straighten up.⁴⁶

On Monday, the 27th of May, the circus arrived in Tralee and Johnny decided to perform his new song. There are two versions of the events which followed and today, over 100 years later, it is impossible to prove which of them is true. The account given by several independent eye witnesses and later written down by Johnny's 13 year old son, goes:⁴⁷

Johnny came into the ring and sang "Do Your Best For One Another." He carried a small flag in each hand, one was green and embroidered with the harp, the other was red and bore the crown. During the song he symbolically mingled the two flags together in supposed friendship, but some of the audience being members of a secret society calling themselves "The New Irelanders"⁴⁸ objected to his sentiments of co-operation with the crown, and hurled abuse at him. Other sections of the audience sprang to his defence and arguments developed, quickly turning into a fierce fight.

While attempting to save the circus equipment, Johnny was struck on the head with an iron bar and then kicked before the staff could rescue him. A local doctor named Fitzmaurice arrived on the scene, and the patched-up Johnny brought back to Sullivan's Hotel⁴⁹ where he was staying, and told not to travel with the show until his wounds had healed. Joe Keeley took the show on to their next engagements while Johnny recovered.

On Thursday, his illness took a turn for the worst and his doctor ordered him into the Tralee Fever Hospital. By Friday evening his condition had steadied. "Goodnight Patterson," Doctor Fitzmaurice said as he was leaving. "I'll see you in the morning." Johnny replied, "You may see me doctor, but I won't see you."⁵⁰ That night, 31st of May, 1889 he died of pneumonia.⁵¹

The following afternoon the circus was playing in the nearby town of Adare, the ringmaster slowly walked to the centre of the ring, stopped the show and read a wire to the audience, telling them that Johnny had died. Johnny Junior remembered that moment, "The audience went down on their knees and said a prayer, then the band played a slow 'Goodbye Johnny Dear.'⁵² The following day, Sunday, he was buried in the New Cemetery, Tralee, in the family plot of a friend, Ted Eager.⁵³

The local newspapers however gave a different version of Johnny's death. *The Kerry Sentinel* reported:⁵⁴

Monday night being unusually wet, Mr. Patterson contracted a severe cold which gave him congestion of the lungs. He was admitted to hospital, but his medical attendant could give no hope whatever of his recovery.

The Clare Journal however, carried this report:⁵⁵

A scene took place on Monday night when Johnny Patterson came into the ring with an embroidered harp on his back, but over it appeared the crown. This did not suit the Nationalist sentiment of a few of the audience who hissed, but finally, the majority of the audience put down the hisses and Johnny proceeded with his song.

The official death certificate did not refer to a fight, but as it described the twice married Johnny as a bachelor, their information cannot have been very accurate.⁵⁶

Joe Keeley and Johnny's widow, Bridget, tried to keep the show going, but without their star attraction, business diminished rapidly and the circus soon disbanded. Records show that less than 6 months later, Keeley married Bridget in the Fermanagh village of Maguiresbridge.⁵⁷ But we are told: "Keeley did not run much longer, his health, worry etc., finally accounted for his death." Bridget then made a 3rd attempt at happiness by marrying Walter Brewer, second clown in Keeley and Patterson's circus.⁵⁸

Johnny Junior went to live with his sister in Killaloe after his father's death, but within a year was working with a circus again. In later years, he ran his own small circus in Ireland, often mistaken for his famous father, but most of his life was spent on shows in England and America. He died in Liverpool in 1950.⁵⁹

Thus was broken the Patterson family link with the circus, but for Johnny Patterson, the Rambler From Clare, his fame as a songwriter is assured.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Johnny Patterson's date of birth taken from his Death Certificate, Custom House, Dublin.
- ² As recorded on Patterson's second marriage certificate.
- ³ Many details of Johnny Patterson's family and early life were written down in later years by his son, Johnny Junior. The author was given access to this material which is now in the possession of Patterson's granddaughter, Mrs. McArdle of Liverpool.

⁴ From records in The National Army Museum, London.

⁵ Johnny Junior's *Memoirs*.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "The Roving Irish Boy" from a *Johnny Patterson Song Sheet*, see 22.

⁸ As published by Waltons, Dublin, publishers of many Patterson songs.

⁹ Details provided by Ben Bono, Dublin, who did considerable research on Patterson's life in the 1930's & 40's.

¹⁰ From Johnny Junior's account. A search in the General Register Office, London, failed to locate the marriage certificate.

¹¹ Johnny Junior's *Memoirs*.

¹² Original lyric of "The Garden Where the Praties Grow," from *Johnny Patterson's Comic Song Book*. This story concerning the addition of the lost verse to the song was told to me by Billy Carter, a musician who arranged many Patterson songs for Waltons.

¹³ From Jack Noonan who lives in Killaloe, grandson of Betty Patterson, Johnny's sister.

¹⁴ "The Cunard Line," published by Clinton T. De Witt, 33 Rose Street, New York in 1878 in a song book entitled, *Johnny Patterson's Great London Circus Songster*.

^{14a} *More Irish Street Ballads* collected by Colm O'Loughlainn. "Rambler From Clare," one of the songs in Joyce's pamphlet, *Irish Peasant Songs*, published, 1912.

¹⁵ George C.D. Odell's *Annals of the New York Stage*, p. 450, published 1927.

¹⁶ *The Miners Journal*, Pottsville, PA (no date available), reprinted on poster. Later used by Patterson in Ireland.

¹⁷ From article by Dr. Robert J. Loeffler, published in Sept. 1974 in *The Bandwagon* (Journal of the Circus Historical Society, Columbus).

¹⁸ Noted on Circus Poster, (see 16).

¹⁹ From Dr. Loeffler's article in *The Bandwagon*.

²⁰ Johnny Junior's *Memoirs*.

²¹ Dr. Loeffler's article.

²² Patterson sold ballad sheets of his songs at his shows. This song "Castles in the Air" was one song printed in *Johnny Patterson's Comic Song Book*, by the Derry Journal Steam Printing Works. A copy of this ballad sheet was given to me by the Circus Historian, Anthony Hippisley-Coxe, Devon.

²³ From an article published in the *Evening Herald* 6/30/1961 by Ben Bono.

²⁴ From A. Hippisley's Coxe's files.

²⁵ Printed in a newspaper (title unknown) 11/30/1935. Given to me by circus historian, Robert Elliott, Dungannon.

²⁶ Dr. Loeffler's article.

²⁷ From *My Circus Life* by James Lloyd, p. 76, published by Douglas, London.

²⁸ *The Irish Times*, Monday, March 22nd, 1886.

²⁹ *The Irish Times*, Wednesday, March 31st, 1886.

³⁰ Details by A. Hippisley-Coxe.

³¹ This bill poster used by Patterson in 1886 is in the possession of A. Hippisley-Coxe.

³² Details of the Circus itinerary kept by the proprietor, Alfred Clarke, and supplied by A. Hippisley-Coxe.

³³ Selena Patterson's death certificate, Custom House, Dublin.

³⁴ Jack Noonan, Killaloe.

³⁵ Robert Elliott's material, published 12/7/1935. (These articles were written by someone who worked on this show).

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ This building is now Castlepollard's Garda Station.

³⁸ See 42.

³⁹ Local tradition in Castlepollard.

⁴⁰ This marriage took place on July 27th, 1887 in Killaloe. Marriage records, Custom House, Dublin.

⁴¹ Marriage Certificate, Custom House, Dublin.

⁴² On March 29th, 1961, a letter appeared in *The Mail* giving details of Johnny Patterson's & Bridget Murray's wedding in St. Michael's Church, Castlepollard. The letter included a description of Bridget (see 38) and was signed "yet another old timer 89 years old."

⁴³ Wehman's *Irish Song Book No. 2*, "containing 128 of the most popular comic and sentimental Irish songs."

⁴⁴ As published by Waltons, Dublin.

⁴⁵ In Johnny Juniors *Memoirs*. Title and a couple of lines are all that remain.

⁴⁶ From Robert Elliott's material, published 12/14/1935.

⁴⁷ I collected an almost similar version from an old Circus man, Frederick Corvinio. His parents were Circus people & contemporaries of Patterson and told Frederick of the events in Tralee.

⁴⁸ The name of the secret society was uncovered by Ben Bono.

⁴⁹ Robert Elliott's material, published 12/14/1935.

⁵⁰ Local tradition in Tralee (no doctor's name appears on the death certificate).

⁵¹ Johnny Patterson's death certificate, Custom House, Dublin.

⁵² Johnny Junior's account.

⁵³ Told to Ben Bono by an old Tralee man. Patterson's unmarked grave was pointed out to me by the caretaker in this cemetery.

⁵⁴ *The Kerry Sentinel*, June 5th, 1889.

⁵⁵ *The Clare Journal* Thursday evening, May 30th, 1889. (This account published before Patterson's death).

⁵⁶ Death certificate, Custom House, Dublin.

⁵⁷ Marriage Certificate issued in Maguiresbridge Church, Nov. 26th, 1889.

⁵⁸ Robert Elliott's material, published 12/14/1935.

⁵⁹ Johnny Junior had 2 children, both of whom are living in England.