

Another experience I had whilst touring in Ireland, and this time it is authentic, from beginning to end, occurred whilst staying with my boy and his family in the town of Omagh, Co Tyrone.

### *A Chance Encounter*

*On Friday morning 6<sup>th</sup> July,  
A lovely day and bright blue sky  
I thought perhaps "twould be a lark  
To take a walk thro' Culmore Park.*

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*Sae settin' oot frae Ardmore Heights,  
(On every hand thee's lovely sights, )  
An; daunerin' on thro' the estate  
I met and brushed wi' kindly fate.*

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*Chance led my footsteps on the road,  
Tae view a maist unique abode,  
The likes of which I'd never seen  
Not anywhere that I had been.*

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*An ornamental garden there  
Gave just excuse to stand and stare,  
A truly most amazing sight,  
It rooted me; in sheer delight.*

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*As I its beauty gazed upon  
A stringy chiel emerged therefrom,  
I wished the man a frank "Good day ,"  
It seemed the proper thing to say.*

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*He glanced at me ; a trifle keenly,  
I thocht ; an' no exactly freenly,  
When I requested, as a boon  
"Could I come in and walk aroon.*

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*Come back the morn ; was his reply  
I sensed that he was "fighting shy"  
I'd thocht the lad was quite a toff  
An' heres him tryin' tae brush me off.*

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*But efter gie'n this curt refusal,  
He then gied me a quick perusal,  
And, "fawr frae bein "a crabbit devil"  
His voice was noo baith saft an' civil.*

---

*My Scottish tongue had "penetrated,"  
And surely had annoyance sated,  
And thereupon we started "crackin',"  
It was a freenship in the makin'.*

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*In curious vein, or just excuse.  
Invited me intae his hoose,  
And instantly it was made clear,  
"A thorough love of music here."*

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*Upon the wa's, afore ma een,  
Just whaur some pictures micht hae been,  
Ma een are shairly no playin' tricks,  
Of fiddles I could number six.*

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Oor names exchanged a promising omen,  
 Wi fand we had a lot in common,  
 An' then wi' unco little swither  
 He shouted ower his butcher brither.

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A pleasant chap, by name o' Cecil,  
 Yin o the freenliest hind o' people  
 He gied ma haun a he'rty shake,  
 In me an interest seemed tae take.

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A nice piano against the wa',  
 Hold on ; I havena teit ye a',  
 For in the room, as well as those,  
 Ma freen had twa or three banjos.

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An' sittin on a table there,  
 An 'lectric organ made me stare,  
 Mooth organs, whistles, a' the best,  
 Your imagination it must test.

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An Ken we little mair ado,  
 Played banjo solos, quite a few  
 And I sang for them two or three,  
 Guid Scottish sangs, baith bold and free.

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But time, the rascal, maks demands,  
 And Ken had business on his hands,  
 Reluctantly, he had tae go  
 Intae the toon, an hoor or so.

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*But ere we pairted, on that nicht,  
I'd made a promise, snug an'ticht,  
I'd come back later, rhyme an' sing,  
We'd shairly "mak the rafters ring.*

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*Sae, hauf past nine I ventured ower  
An' noo oor ranks were swelled tae fower  
He'd brocht alang a freen, Tom Moore,  
A proper boyo, thats for sure.*

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*As weel as playin on the fiddle,  
On penny whistle he could diddle,  
Mooth organ tae, an' also spoons,  
Aye, postman Tam could "dae his roon's.*

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*Forbye Tam brocht alang his boy  
(The lad maun bring him muckle joy )  
On penny whistle he's no bad,  
A very likely sort o' lad.*

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*Noo brither Cecil jines the ban',  
Complete wi his accord-i-an.  
A musical en - thus - i - ast  
His playin' days are faur frae past.*

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*An' oor host, Ken wi' his banjo  
Could fairly mak" Traditional " go  
Wi' me supplyin' sangs an' rhyme.  
An' no a thocht, -- -- -- or care, for time.*

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*An' Ken, a credit tae the nation,  
Provided guid" throat lubrication,"  
And inspiration to provide  
A new five-giller set aside.*

*Ken Kinloch has a Scotch backtround,  
 A uesfu' thing tae hae around,  
 "A crabbit devil " ! God help me,  
 I've seldom met a man sae free."*

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*Wi' Cream o' barley so inspired,  
 Strathspey an' reel stood side by side,  
 Between us lads there ws nae "Border,"  
 An' fun an' music was the order.*

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*Between us, a' the time flew by,  
 Sure, music's charm can never die,  
 The Scots an' Irish weel are suitit,  
 "Aye, thats a fact," nae doot aboot it.*

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*But "boys a boys" its efter one,  
 If I don't go, I'll sure get "done,"  
 Still ; wife's no bad she kens. Ye see,  
 Hoo much they ootin's mean tae me.*

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*An so we pairted ; much uplifted,  
 (" The Scots an Irish lads are "gifted,")  
 The hope, and wish remain I'll say,  
 We lads maun meet anither day.*

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*Wm S McCoubrey*