

## [Introduction to Mr. Cooke

Tales - Jokes Songs and Rhymes - Poetry' Beliefs and Customs - Folkstuff

Introduction to MR. COOKE: REMINESENCES

by A. Fitzpatrick

Somewhere along Oneida Ave. in the Bronx, you'll come across a modern red brick house which is set back about eight feet from the sidewalk. Surrounding the house is a lovely garden and a carefully groomed lawn. The garden is abundant with flowers of all kinds and colors.

Ring the bell. After a few seconds the door will be opened by a very dignified personage with a bristling moustache and a Van Dyke beard. You will be cordially invited to enter. This is Mr. C. born in County Sligo . , Ireland , 82 years ago. You note his rosy complexion and his gentle voice.

Inside, he shows you around his immaculately kept home. The room to which he finally takes you is furnished tastefully and expensively with a living room suite, a piano, table, rugs, draperies and ferns.

Light a cigarette and offer one to Mr. C. He refuses; [hen?] he neither drinks nor smokes.

You ask him many questions. He is never embarrassed. He answers in great detail. He understands your purpose.

You are informed that Mr. C. is a retired stonecutter, that his wife is deceased and that he has six children living. Although his formal education never went further than grammar

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school, Mr C. is self-educated through his interest in literature and mechanics. insert paragraph on next sheet

And finally, if you are not sufficiently impressed by this time, Mr. C. will tell you that gently inform you that he is the President of the Eucharistic Society, the highest order, socially, in the Catholic faith and the only organization of its kind in America. He is also a member of the Holy Name Society and the [Nocturnal Division?] Society All this apart from his typically keen Irish memories of [?] New York. [Prepare reader to Mr C's ??]. [?]

Insert — It is difficult to detect any trace of the famed Irish brogue in Mr. C's speech; that is, at least for the first few minutes. Then suddenly, when he has warmed up to the story, he slips into as good a brogue as ever was spoken in County Sligo. [A.M.?] [A?] [1831?]

### 10/6 Circumstances of Interview

State. New York.

Name of Worker. A Fitzpatrick.

Address. 327 East 145th St. Bronx.

Date. October 5th 1938.

Subject. [Mr Cooke: Reminesences?] [?] and jokes.

1. Time of Interview. [1.30 P.M.?)

2. Place of Interview. [At home.?)

3. Name and address of informant. [T.A.Cooke. 4300 Oneida Ave. Bronx?].

4 Name and address of person who secured informant.

[H. Leonard?]. [Manager A. & P store?]. [143rd St and Third Avenue?].

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5 Name and address of person, if any accompanying me. [None.?)

6 Description of house and surroundings. [—?)

The residence, one family type, consists of a typically modern residence. Built of red brick, and set back about eight feet from the sidewalk, it is surrounded by a beautifully kept garden which extends alongside the side of the house.

The entrance is to the side. The lawn is carefully groomed and there [?) is an abundance of flowers of all varieties, visible to the eye.

The home itself, the interior, is immaculate and most beautiful. As one enters the hallway, he is confronted by a wide carpeted stairway, which leads to the upper rooms. The room in which the interview was held was a picture of neatness, cleanliness and was indicative of a man of ample means.

The furnishings, [?) [?) while not too elaborate elaborate , were undoubtedly expensive, and consisted of a Piano, a beautiful three piece suite, end tables, rug, scatter rugs, ferns and draperies, a home beautiful to behold.

The window view disclosed other beautiful one family residences of a like type, all set in their own beautiful and well-cared-for grounds. A Fitzpatrick. Page-seven. [B?] 10/[?)

State. N.Y.

Name of Worker. A Fitzpatrick.

Address. 327 East 145th St [Bx?)

Date. October 5th 1938.

Subject. [Mr Cooke: Reminesences?)

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1. Ancestry; None of importance.

2. Family. Wife deceased. six children living.

3. Place and date of birth. Tubercurry, Co Sligo. Ireland. Jan 6th 1856. 4 places lived in and dates. 35 years residen at 879 10th Ave. N.Y.C. three years at present address. other places not recalled.

5. Education. Ordinary grammar school.

6. Occupations and accomplishments. Stonecutter by trade. at present retired.

7. Special skills and interests. Mechanics. and Books.

8. Community and religious activities. Active in all social activities in his immediate parish. Is a member of The Holy Name Society and The Nocturnal Division Society. He is also President of the Eucharistic Society at 76th St and Lexington Avenue. (The Eucharistic Society is the only one of its kind in America and is the highest order, Socially, in the Catholic Faith. 9 Description of Informant. Mr Cooke . impresses one at first sight as a person of high breeding and education. Soft spoken and gentle in his manger he conveys an impression of one who demans demands respect and in a position to secure it.

He stands perhaps five feet five inches high is grey and is the owner of two bristling moust aches and a Van Dyke beard. It is quite evident from his rosy complexion that he has always been a lover of the great outdoors. He neither drinks or smokes and has never indulged in either vices. The visitor is mostly impressed by his neat apparance and the cordial welcome extended. Comment may also be made by the painstaking efforts on Mr Cookes part to make the visitor feel at ease. [C?]

State. N.Y.

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Name Of Worker. A Fitzpatrick.

Address. 327 East 147th St. Bx.

Date October 4th 1938. 6

Subject. Mr T.A.Cooke, Informant.

Folklore. New York.

[md] [ell?] "Well , ye're askin me a lot, on account of me mind not being what it used to be, but if I can help you any I'll be glad to.

Anyhow, I'm 82 years ould. I was born in a small town outside place called Tubercurry, Co Sligo. Maybe ye've heard of Tubercurry, Its not much av a place but I Was born there anyhow, and I first saw the light of day on January 6th 1856.

All me folks were simple folk like meself. Me Father was a wheelwright but I had a likin' for stonecuttin' and if I do say so meself, I was'nt a bad hand at it. I had a sister out here in New York and she was always askin' us to come out here and live. I also had an [uncle?] in Staten Island, but we niver bothered with him. Anyhow, we made our minds up to come out, and we did,-the whole sivin of us. We sailed from Queenstown, (they call it ['?] Cobh ['?] now, but it does'nt change it a bit), and we landed in New York,-( he pronounced it 'Knew Yark'), [-?] on a Sunday morn on June the 12th, 1881 , after a tin day trip.

We stayed in a Hotel for a few days and thin we located in a house at 879 Tinth Avenue, That was 57 years ago. It was real Irish section that we lived in , in thim days , and mind ye, we lived there for thirty five years. Well , what with wan thing and another, some of the younger wans gettin' married and such, we moved to other places and now I'm livin at me present address for the past three years.

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I forgot to tell ye that I lost me Wife some years ago and a better woman niver lived, God Rist her Soul.

2

[?] A Fitzpatrick. Page 2

[md]

“Well, to get back to the beginnin'. Whin I landed here I had no trouble gettin' a job, anyone could get a job in thim days. The first job I got was with the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad where I worked for many years at me trade. I also worked for a long time with the New York Cintral. They did'nt pay ye much wages in thim days but what ye got ye could buy a lot with, if ye understand. Why, you could go into a butcher's shop and get a couple of pounds of corned beef and they'd throw in the cabbage to go with it, try and get it now, and they'd give ye all you'd want, too.

But its not the same New York to day, no sir, I've seen some great changes in me day. Ye would'nt believe, to look at it now, that at seventy second St and Eight Avenue,- it's Central Park West now,- that right opposite [theMajestic?] Hotel, where the Dakota apartment house now stands, and bye the way, that's the ouldest apartment house in the city to day, did ye know that?, well, as I was sayin', right there , where the ould Dakota stands, it used to be a goat farm and many's the time I saw the people buyin' the goat's milk to feed to their children.

Ah Yes, times have changed. Where are your Horse cars?. Ye may laugh bedad, but let me tell you, ye were more comfortable in thim cars in the Winter than ye' are to day in ye're subways and elevator railroads. They were different Winters then. Plenty of cold and snow. You look like a man of fifty years of age or thereabouts and mabe maybe you rimember the ould belly stoves that they carried in the horse cars, and the box av coal

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and the shovel that the conductor used to put the coal on the fire?. Even the passengers themselves used to shovel the coal when the fire went low .

Ye know, ridin' on the horse cars on a Sunday was great treat in

3

Page three. A Fitzpatrick

them days. The young fellas and the girls would have lots of fun. Why there used to be dancin' in the cars on Sunday evenin's. And I mind the time when girls that had't any escort would stand on a corner by the tracks playin' the accordeon and the mouth organ in the hopes that the car would stop and someone pay their fare so that they would get on and join in the fun. There would be dancin' and singin' and a wild time all round. Ah, they certainly had good times. [??]

They had gas lamps them days and I can see him now, the lamplighter, comin' along the street with the long pole in his hand and the flame on the top, inside a brass contraption to prevent it from blowin' out, and how he used to stick it up inside the lamp to light the light. Ye'd think it was only yesterday.

There are lots of things I can tell ye but ye'll have to give me time to think them up. Could ye give me a couple of days and I'll see what I can do?. I also have some ould '[Commalyies?]; (Irish songs), that I'll let ye have, if I can find them, and also some poetry.

Here's a couple of verses that [?] I can recall; Ireland's Son so good and bold Not to be tempted by women or gold. And there are women and gold galore. They love Virtue and Honor more.

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Here's another wan; And she went on with her maiden smile. Safety lighted her 'round the Green Isle. For blessed forever are they who will ride On Erin's Virtue and Erin's Pride.

4

A Fitzpatrick. Page Four.

Wait 'til I tell this wan;

When I first came over to America, as I told ye, I stayed in a Hotel. It was on a Sunday morn and after Mass I was standin' in the doorway by meself, when another fellow came over to me, he was Irish too, and axed me for a match.

Well, I had a couple of matches in me pocket and I gave him wan. When he lit his pipe he asked me if I'd have a cigar. I told him I did'nt smoke.

Afetr a while he asked me if I'd have a drink. and I told him that I did'nt drink. He seemed to get mad for he suddenly turned to me and said 'Do ye eat grass? because ye're neither fit company for man or beast, and thin be walked away.

That wan reminds me of a story that I heard in the ould country. You, as an Irishman, as ye say ye are, surely must have heard of Lord Leitrim after which the County is named?.

Well, he was a regular tyrant of a landlord as we all know. There was no standin' him. He made the lives of the people so miserable. Wan day a couple of Irishmen vowed to kill him and so wan night they hid in the bushes alonside the road, where he always used to pass in his carriage at nine o'clock at night.

They waited until nine fifteen and until nine thirty and they started to get uneasy because he had'nt come along and he was never known to be late. Nine forty-five passed by and at tin o'clock wan of thim turned to the other and said 'Something must have gone wrong, Cassidy, he was niver as late as this before'. 'I dont know phat can be keepin him', said

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Cassidy, 'BUT I HOPE NOTHIN' HAPPENED TO THE POOR FELLAH'," 5 A Fitzpatrick.  
Page Five.

"And another wan that I can recall, is the wan about Cromwell, the Tyrant. Father Tom Burke could vouch for this;

There was a statue of Cromwell in Dublin. I dont know if it's there now or not, but anyhow, so the story goes, two Irishmen were standing under it, tearing Cromwell apart.

'He's in Hell, where he ought to be' said one.

Just then Father Burke passed by and hearing the remark said, 'Ye ought to ashamed of yerself for sayin' that'.

'Well, ye're Riverince, Phat's the use of havin' Hell, if he's not in it,'.

"And before I finish, I have to go now, but I'll see ye to-morrow, As I say, before I finish, I'll tell ye the wan about the Irishman that came into a saloon and asked for a bottle of whiskey in a hurry.

The bartender said 'Sure, but why the hurry?'

'Well!, said the Irishman, 'Me friend is sick in bed and the doctor is with him, He's just asked him has he seen any pink elephants floatin' around the room, and mind ye, he said that he did'nt;- and bedad, THE ROOM IS FULL OF THEM "' MORE. Circumstances of Interview

State. New York.

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H.Leonard. Manager A.& P store. 143rd St and Third Avenue.

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The window view disclosed other beautiful one family residences of a like type, all set in their own beautiful and well-cared-for grounds. 6 A Fitzpatrick. Irish folk-Lore. Page 6

Week Of Oct 10th 1933. 10/13 [920?] Add to [?] story

Poems from collection of T.A.Cook [?] 4300 Oneida Ave. Bronx.

——— GOD SAVE ALL HERE.

[md] There's a prayer that's breathed alone In dear old Ireland's land. 'Tis uttered on the threshold's stone With smile and clasping hand. And oft, perchance, 'tis muttered low With sigh and falling tear. The grandest greeting man may know- The prayer, "God save all here".

\*\*\*\*\* In other lands they know not well How priceless is the lore That hedges with a sacred spell Old Ireland's cabin door. To those it is no empty sound Who think with many a tear. Of long-loved memories wreathing 'round The prayer, "God save all here".

\*\*\*\*\* Live on, O prayer, in Ireland still To bless each threshold free The echoes of her hones to fill With sacred fervency. And Guarding with it's holy spell. The soul and conscience clear. Be graven on each heart as well, The prayer, "God save all here".

\*\*\*\*\* This little poem was published in a "Knights of Columbus dance program 50 yrs ago. Where it came from, Mr Cook [could not explain?] 7 2 No 2

A Fitzpatrick. Irish Folk Lore [Page 7?]

Week of Oct 10th 1938.

## Library of Congress

Poems from the collection of T A Cook Cooke 43000 4300 Oneida Ave. Bx. 'Tis Always So.

[md] Across the meadow with clover sweet, I wandered one evening with weary feet. For my heart was heavy with untold woe, for everything seemed lo go wrong, you know. 'Twas one of those days, whose cares and strife, quite overshadow the good in life.

— So, lone and sad, 'neath the twilight stars, I wandered down to the Pasture bars, To the pasture bars, 'neath the hillside steep, where patiently waited a flock of sheep. For the happy boy, with whistle and shout, who was even now coming, to turn them out.

—————  
“Good morning”, said he, with [?] boyish grace, And a smile lit up his handsome face. He let down the bars, and we both stepped back, and I said, “You have more white sheep than black”. “Why yes”, he replied, “and did'nt you know? More white than black, why, 'Tis always so”.

\*\*\*\*\* He soon passed on with is his flock 'round the hill. But down by the pasture I lingered still. Pondering well, on the words of the lad. “More white than black,” More good than bad. More joy than sorrow, more bliss than woe. “More white than black, and “'Tis always so”.

\*\*\*\*\* And since that hour, when troubles rife, gather, and threaten to shroud my life, Or I see some soul on the downward track- I cry, “There are more white sheep than black” And I thank my God that I learned to know, the blessed fact,” 'Tis always so”.

\*\*\*\*\* 3 Irish Folk Lore . A Fitzpatrick.

Week of Oct 10th 1938. Page three.

[Poems from the collection of T.A. Cook Cooke 43000 4300 Oneida Ave Bx.?)

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[md] WILL MY SOUL PASS THROUG THROUGH IRELAND.?

The story of a dying old woman and the Priest who has come to visit her ( Compose  
Composed by Dennis O Sullivan of New York City, over 50 years ago).

— ———— “O’ Soggarth, Aroon, sure I know life is fleeting. Soon, soon, in the strange  
earth, my poor bones will lie. I have said my last prayer and received my last blessing.  
And if the Lord’s willing, I’m ready to die. But, Soggarth Aroon,, can I never again see, The  
valleys and hills of my dear native land When my soul takes its flight from this dark world  
of sorrow Will it pass through old Ireland to join the blest band?

————— “Soggarth.” is “Priest” in Irish “Aroon” ——— “Dead.” “Arrah” —  
“Well.” ([?]? ) O’ Soggarth Aroon, sure I know that in Heaven. The loved ones are waiting  
and watching for me. And the Lord knows how anxious I am to be with them In those  
realms o ! joy, ’mid sould pure and free. Yet, Soggarth, I pray, ere you leave me for ever.  
Believe the last doubt of a poor dying soul Whose hope, next to God, is to know that when  
leaving ’Twill pass through Old Ireland On the way to it’s goal.

————— O, Soggarth, Aroon, I have kept through all changes, The thrice blessed  
shamrock, to lay o’er my clay. And, Oh, it has minded me, often and often Of that bright  
smiling valley, so far, far away. Then tell me, I pray you, will I never again see, The place  
where it grew on my own native sod? When my body lies cold, in the land of the stranger  
Will my soul pass through Erin on it’s way to our God.?

\*\*\*\*\* “Arrah, bless yo my child, sure I thought it was Heaven, You wanted to go to, the  
moment you died. And such is the place on the ticket I’m giving, But a coupon for Ireland,  
I’ll stick on it’s side. You’re soul shall be free as the wind on the prairies. And I’ll land you at  
Cork, on the banks of the Lee. And two little angels, I’ll give you, like fairies To guide you  
alright, over mountains and sea.

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Next Page.- Has not been published, [only?] in a dance program 50 yrs ago. according to Mr Cook. There were [??????]