

Finnegan's Wake

"Reprints from Sing Out!" Vol.5/1962 - page 306

Banjo solo by Jean Louis Thiry

Members of the Gaelic League - an Irish nationalist organization are reported to have objected to this song as being typical of English-originated stereotypes about the Irish. The music is an Irish jig-tune, with these words apparently dating from the era of the Victorian stage. If the song was intended originally as an anti-Irish satire (exploiting the twin stereotypes of lack of sobriety and shortage of intelligence), the Irish themselves have continued to sing it more in the way a people have of laughing at their own folk heroes. Certainly, it is in this fashion that The Clancy Brothers perform the song in their album of Irish drinking songs, *Come Fill Your Glass With Us* (Tradition TLP 1032). It was from this song that James Joyce took the title for one of his most famous books. Irish folksinger and folklorist Patrick Galvin comments: "Joyce took the not-so-dead Finnegan as symbolic of Ireland herself, which gives the song a literary and historical interest which has nothing to do with the actual words. The use of such a song with this symbolic purpose was clearly satirical on Joyce's part."

388

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Tim Fin - ne - gan lived in Wal - king Street A gen - tle Irish - man migh - ty odd He'd a

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beautiful brogue so rich and sweet And to rise in the world he carried a hod. You see, he'd a sort o' the

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tip-p'lin' way, With a love for the liquor poor Tim was born, To help him on his work each day, He'd a

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-Chorus

"drop o' the craythur" e - v'ery morn Whack fol the dah now dance to your Part - ner Welt the floor your

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trotters shake Was - n't it the truth I told you? Lots of fun at Fin - ne - gan's Wake.

"FINNEGAN'S WAKE", from which James Joyce took his title, is probably about a hundred years old. It is the theme song of the book, and is quoted in every chapter. The hero of the book, H. C. Earwicker, is also called Finnegan, as well as Humpty Dumpty, Adam, and others who fell. The song describes how he was brought back to life. (Dominic's Behan *Finnegan's Wake* 1959 EP)

+ Thumb • Index finger .. Middle finger ▲ Arpeggio Po Pull off H Hammer on