

[Page 17 - Searching for Cape Breton Folk Songs](#)ISSUE : [Issue 41](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1986/1/1

his cottage. Well, they were living right there at the shore below. I was telling John D. when we were living down there, "Now, this is where Andrew Dunphy and Bill and Selina launched the boat to save the ones that were drowning." And that Frank Rambeau, when they rescued him, he told somebody, "There's not enough water in Aspy Bay to drown me." He was drowned out of Gloucester. Fishing out of Gloucester. Andrew never married. Nor Bill ever married. Nor the sister ever married. Now, (Andrew Dunphy) composed another beautiful song. (About) the MacPherson children. My sister Florence used to sing that song beautiful. It's a family that lived down in Dingwall. And diphtheria spread. And that was a death disease then. And this old Andrew Dunphy was staying with them, you know. There were 3 girls. And 2 died. And that Andrew was sitting up with them at night. And this Christie was the last. And she was dying. And the father had to dig the grave and make the little caskets, because anyone was out stayed out and anyone was in stayed in because you weren't allowed--because it was a deadly disease. And there was no cure then. So they'd sit up and they watched that those children died. And Christie was the last. So he told the mother and father, "Go and lay down"--Andrew Dunphy, He said, "Now you people lay down and I'll sit up with Christie." So she was choking. She said, "For God's sake get me a drink, get me some water." He said, "I can't do that." They believed anyone would drink this cold water, they were dead. But they were burnt up with fever. So she said, "Oh, get me a drink." He said, "If I give you a drink now, what will happen?" She said, "I'm gone anyway." So he said, "You'll never tell that I ever gave you water." So he tells the story--Andrew, I heard him telling it. He said, "I went and I got her the dipper of cold water and she drank it--and that one lived and went to the States and was married." Christie. He made this beautiful song. My sister used to sing it, but I don't know it. But he had a verse in it: "No more will Annie feed the flocks as she has done before/ No more I hear her merry voice or her footsteps at the door"--that was part of it. But it was beautiful, beautiful. The knowledge of the man. It was beautiful. Only those three songs are sad songs. "The Fate of Daniel Gwinn" As Sung by John D. MacDonald Written by Andrew Dunphy leave their native shore in the prime of youth and bloom with prospects bright before. THE FATE OF DANIEL GWINN Both young and old, I pray draw near, with sorrow I begin While I relate, although in brief, the fate of Daniel Gwinn. He and his comrade late last fall did leave their native shore All in the prime of youth and bloom with prospects bright before. To go from home and friends is sad for parting causes pain But still those young men felt assured they'd see their friends again To home and friends they bid adieu, they went on board the train That iron horse soon bore them on, they arrived in Bemis, Maine. They were employed by Cummings there to work upon a mill And were it not for what occurred they might have been there still But death will come although unseen in some mysterious way Though nature gave no warning voice, it was his dying day. Those young men rose with cheerful hearts one winter morning clear To go as usual to their work not dreaming death was near The sun shone in the distant



east cast forth a silvery gleam The boss he asked Dan if he'd choose to go and drive  
a team. But Dan replied he'd rather not but Alfred he would go And haul the logs  
from where they lay down to the mill below Young Dan he went upon a roof saying  
that he rather would Not dreaming that death lurked beneath the very place he  
stood. (18) John D. MacDonald, Aspy Bay