

Tape 219 A

Rory and the Shoes
or, Rory and the Bevil; folk tale told as personal experience by Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. This tale reported from nowhere else but Hungary where it is well know.
Tape a bit noisy, so repeated on 219B;
compare texts/

Rory Rids Himself Of A Devil; folk tale told as personal experience; calls on God and opens Bible and devil disappears.

Rory's Dream of Hell; folk tale told as dream; brother has gone to hell and takes Rory to see what it is like; sees different forms of punishment

Rory Shot A Bear; hunting story told as true experience which it may have been.

Ghost Story: told as true experience, not very intelligible, in its meaning.

Bagpipes; not too tuneful; often played for tourists camping near Sugar Loaf; Road to the Isles, and Old Tune Inverness Gathering.

Informant for whole tape: Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf,
Cape Breton, N.S.

Rory and the Shoes
or, Rory and the Devil

Tape ~~XXXXA~~ 219B
See 219A

Well, I was one time in Pleasant Bay, up about a good many years ago. I went to Cheticamp, and we were storm-stayed up there, and I told my brother we would walk home. It was kinda late in the evening. While I was walkin' down, you know, the place they call Cape Rouge Island down a way, down at the lower place of Cheticamp, there was a man walked up from the beach, and was all full of kelp, seaweed, and every thing.

"Hello Rory," he said.

"Hello," I told him. I said, "How do you know me if I didn't know you?"

"Oh," he says, "I'm the devil," he says.

"I said, "If You're the devil what's taking you here?"

"Well, I got a pair of shoes here, and now if you can wear them," he says, "until the end of the year, I'll give you a fortune. But now if you won't bury them at the end of the year, it's the end of you."

"I'll take you. I'll take you."

"To hell, that's where I'm from," he says.

"All right." I was a pretty smart man at that time, you know. "I 'spose it's an awful pair of shoes that going to last me to the end of the year"

"All right, you take the shoes." I put the shoes on and I planned to fire off my own. If I was going fast before then, I was going still faster thanx again. I got down to Pleasant Bay. I was staying with my brother, and my brother's wife asked me,

"Where you got the shoes?"

"I gotx them from the devil."

"Well," she said, "you better burn them."

"No, I'm not going to burn them. I'm getting me a fortune with those shoes yet." Well I started jumping around here and there among the rocks and everything, couldn't wear them. The soles was getting thicker every day. Well, I said, that's going to be the end. The end of me this time. It's the end. Then I was at a wrack (wreck) in the shore, away at the upper end of Pleasant Bay there was a wrack come there, oh maybe two hundred years ago there was a wrack ^{come in} ~~in there~~. I took my wife and I went up along the bank, ^{along} and ~~around~~ the shore looking for ~~miss~~ ducks. Well I see a little old man coming out of the woods, you know. He was about three or four feet tall. A long beard on him going down to the ground.

"Hello Rory," he told me.

"Hello," I told him. I says, "Looka here mister, how did you know me and I don't know you?"

"Oh," he said, "manys the time I seen you over here," he said. I've come here to do you a favour."

"What favour are you going to give to me?"

"You look what's on your feet," he says. "The soles is getting thick."

I says, "Yes, they're getting thicker."

"Well if you'll do what I'll tell you," he says, "I'll give you - you'll be a lucky man. You know what that shoe's made of? Human flesh," he says, "shoes. The more you walk in them, the thicker they'll get, but when you'll go home in the night," he says, "you go and fill them full of clay. Every night fill them full of clay. He says, "When a man will die," he says, "you'll go into clay," he says, "and ~~xxxx~~ it'll pare away little by little. The flesh won't stand the clay."

That was all right. I went home and I filled the shoes full of clay. In the morning the sole was getting thin, and a week this

time, I only had the top of the shoes, all worn away. The year came to the end. I was going down the road at Pleasant Bay, and oh there were about fifteen or twenty young fellows like myself, you know, jumping around and fooling, and when the end of the year came I seen a streak of fire coming right out of the air, a streak of fire. Here was old Mr. Devil come right out of that.

"Rory, did you wear the shoes?"

I says, "Yes. I wore them out to the end."

"Mebbe you did."

I says, "I did. Here, look, there is your shoes. They're all gone," I told him, "no more shoes."

"Well," he says, "all right," he says. "You wore the shoes. Here's your fortune," he says, "in the bag." I holle red all the young fellers to come over to get some of the gold, you know. When I opened the bag, do you know whathappened the bag? It was a whole bag of horse manure, and that swas the end of the story.

Told by Mr. Rory MacKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, N.S., and recorded by Helen Creighton, August 1961

See also 219B where it is better told, repeated, and added to, This story not known by any of the great scholars at Keil, Germany, attending the Folklore Congress in 1959, but it is well known by Dr. Linda Degh, Hungary, who has collected many variants. They go farther than this and become more and more obscene.

Question: You had a big bear attack you one time, did you, Mr. MacKinnon? Where? Here?

Lowland

Answer: No, up on the ~~KAKKXK~~ Cove. Oh up about, I suppose about fifteen miles from here, maybe more.

Well one day, we had a lot of cattle you know. I used to go after them in the evening and take them home. I went up there; there was a long point running out and I could hear an awful noise, like a fellow pounding an ash with his stick. Well I didn't know what was the reason. Then I'd hear a whistle. I went up then where the noise was. Here was a big bear sitting on a big rock. When he'd hear me coming he'd hit his paw on the rock. Along with this queer noise he'd make a whistle. And I had a big dog, weighed about a hundred and fifty. When I got up so handy to him there were two cubs, two young bears, alongside of him, and the bear made a jump for me. She caught me and took all the clothes off me, all my coat, and the dog caught the bear. Him and the dog tumbled over the bank and I put for home with the fright, and when I got home I told my father. I said,

"Look here mister, we'd better go and get the dog from the bear. The bear is going to kill the dog. After a couple of hours we could hear the dog barking away up ^{is} alongside the mountain. When we went up there, here the bear was in the tree. My father fired at the bear with a gun and he tumbled out of the tree and we took home the carcass. We skinned him and took the hide and the hide was seven feet across, an awful big bear. And after that day to this day no more bear was ever seen since that.

Question: Had the dog killed the bear?

Answer: No, the dog didn't kill the bear, but pretty near. He put the bear in the tree, and then I shot the bear.

Told by Mr. Rory MacKinnon, Sugar Loaf, N.S. and recorded by Helen Creighton, August 1961

We were coming home and we seen this in the graveyard.

Question: You were coming home through the graveyard?

Answer: We were coming home alongside the graveyard. Well, I'll tell you about that. Once ~~Johnny~~ ^{Guy Wilkie} ~~Williker(?)~~ came after me. You know he lives down here and he told me to go up to Allan Guinney's(?) and have a spell of telling ghost stories. We were telling ghost stories there till about eleven o'clock or ~~something~~ it was twelve o'clock when we left, but when we were coming up the road we got as far as the graveyard we seen these two big blazes of fire in the graveyard, ~~and~~ ~~sticking~~ ~~out~~ sticking out, and every blink of his eyes would drive the fire over ~~the~~ ^{to} Dingwall about four miles, and he'd stand about nine feet tall and he had a big black gown on ~~going~~ going down to the ground. His face was about two feet long or more, and his two eyes was right straight like a lobster's eyes, and every blink of his eyes would send the fire about four miles. Guy ~~Williker(?)~~ ^{Wilkie} told me,

"My God," he says, "look what's in the graveyard. "

"I can see it," I told him. I said, "Stop the truck; we'll go and see it right." He says,

"You's not fit to stay here any longer," he says. "This is an awful thing."

"Well," I told him. "Get your flashlight; we'll look at him right." Well when ~~Johnny~~ ^{Guy} Wilkie seen him right he fired the flashlight to the bottom of the truck and he stamped on her. I didn't know if he was going to kill me or kill himself. We come home to the gate here. He says, "Rory, are you too frightened to go into the house alone?"

I says, "No, I'll go in."

"Well," he says, (a few words unintelligible) "at my place

I'm going to smash the truck and all getting in through the door," he said, "with the fright."

And that's the end of the story.

Question: When did you see that, Mr. MacKinnon?

Answer: Oh it was about five years ago. It was up by the little church.

Told by Mr. Rory MacKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, N.S., and recorded by Helen Creighton, August 1961

Rory and the Shoes
or, Rory and the Devil: told by Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf; repeated, added to, and changed in a few details; compare 219A1

Witchcraft and Fairies: short conversation on this subject and the prevalence hereat one time.

Fairy Offers Buttermilk: folk tale, short but interesting; have similar tale from ~~XXXXXX~~ Marble Mountain also in 1961, not tape recorded.

Jack the Lantern: long folk tale of man who repeatedly tricks the devil and is doomed to wander forever; good tale, well told.

Informant: Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, N.S.

Once long ago I was fishing with my brother up in Pleasant Bay, staying with him. Me and him went to Cheticamp and we got up there and we were storm-stayed. Well we were there a couple of days and I told him we might as well go back home, we'll walk home. Was kinda late in the evening we were coming down. I guess I was going a little faster than what he was going and I got ahead of him down at Cape Rouge, down on the lower end of Cheticamp. I seen a man walking up from the shore. He was all full of kelp and seaweed.

"Rory, hello Rory," he told me.

"Hello," I told him. "That's queer," I said, "You knows me and I don't know you."

"Well," he says, "I'm the devil," he said, "and I got a pair of shoes here if you can wear ^{them} till the end of the year I'll give you a fortune. Now if you won't wear ^(out) them at the end of the year," he said, "it's the end of you."

I said, "That's good enough." I put on those shoes and I guess I was going faster before but I was going still faster now. I wasn't long till I got to Pleasant Bay. I got to where my brother's wife was and she looked towards my feet and she said,

"Where you got them fancy shoes? Where you got the shoes?" I told her I got them from the devil and I was supposed to wear them out at the end of the year. I told them if I would wear the shoes it would be the end of me. (wear the shoes out) I used to be jumpin' around rocks and around everything, you know, and I couldn't wear them out. The soles were getting thicker all the time. I said to myself, "Now, this is going to be the end of me for sure."

Well there was a wrack (wreck) went ashore up away the upper end of Pleasant Bay. I went up there one evening for a walk to

kill

about some ducks. While I was going there I seen a little man coming out of the woods. He had a beard on him - he was about three or four feet tall and he had a beard that was hitting the ground.

"Hello Rory," he says.

"Hello."

I says, "It's a queer thing that every man meets me I never seen before says, 'Hello Rory.'"

"Well, I see you here lots of times," he said. "Many times I was alongside of you but you couldn't see me, but you see me now," he said. "The point is I'm coming to ~~do~~ give you a favour. You got shoes there from the devil," he said.

I says, "Yes."

"Well you fill them shoes full of clay. Them shoes is made of all human flesh. When you fill them shoes with ~~any~~ clay every night they'll all cave away."

I wasn't long before I put ~~them~~ back for home and I filled ~~them~~ the shoes full of clay. In the morning, the sole was thin. I started putting them in, putting the clay in every evening till I had nothing left but the tops. Well the year was about to an end. Well at the end of the day of the year just as it was coming on to the night when the year was at the end me and a couple, about twenty little boys with meself foolin' around, I seen a streak of fire coming ^{right} out of the air. I says, "He's coming now." They asked me what's comin? I said, "The devil's coming."

"You wore the shoes, Rory?" he says,

"I wore them," I says, "to nothing. There's your old tops; take them. I want my fortune now you told me when I'd give you the shoes.

"I got it right here," he says, "in this bag. There's

your fortune," he says, "it's right there," and I opened the bag. I hollered for all the people to come round, the little fellers,

"Come all you, I'll give a handful of gold to every one of you." When I opened the bag, what I had in the bag was horse manure, and the old devil went one streak to hell, and that's the end of the story.

Told by Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, N.S., and recorded by Helen Creighton, August 1961. See also Tape 219A2 where it is told a little differently.

Question: Mr. McKinnon, how old were you when that happened?

Answer: Oh I was about fifteen. Just a boy.

Question: Now this little man you saw with the beard, what was he wearing? What clothes did he have on?

Answer: Oh he had big long fishing boots on. You know he was aboard this wrack (wreck) and he was drowned there, and that was his ghost. And he came to give me a favour. He knew I got the shoes from him, you know, from the devil, and he was drowned there. Oh all the wrack is there, you know, all the old irons and everything, was there on the beach where they were wracked. There was never a man saved. Every man that was aboard was drowned. It was an old fashioned ship.

Question: Where was it from, do you know?

Answer: Well I couldn't tell you that, where it was from, but it was wracked up there; we call it Phillip's Cove/That's the name of the cove as you went in, Phillip's Cove.

Question: Did he have lots of hair on his head?

Answer: He had lots of hair; he was all hair, and all whiskers, you know, and fishing boots. Maybe he was taller than that; it was dark when I was talking to him. You could see among the bushes how big he was, but I took him for about four feet or five feet tall.

Question: Did they tell many stories of witches here?

Answer: Witch stories? Oh yes, there were lots of them one time. My father was all full of them witch stories. Fairies.

Question: Fairies. Did any one ever see the little people?

Answer: They say they used to see them here maybe a hundred years ago. You don't see them now.

Question: Did your father see them?

Answer: Yes, he said he seen them. On Black Point. Some of them had green clothes on them, right short little people.

Question: Were they good fairies? Did they bring you good fortune?

Answer: Well I don't know. They'll give you luck, you know, fairies. They say that that time, long ago, they'd give you luck.

Fairy story told by Mr. Rory McKinnon on next page.

There was one fellow one time was cutting a stick of wood, and there were hills, you know, among the woods. You could see smoke under the hills, long ago. They knocked down a big tree, struck on top of these hills in the woods, you know, built of clay. They heard underneath the ground,

"Oh dear, my hedge is hurt." The tree struck the hill.

They said,

"Oh dear my hedge is hurt." After a little while out came a fairy with a wooden dish full of buttermilk. One feller asked first,

"I wish I had a drink of buttermilk," you know, in this place they were cutting. After a little while - there were two of them cutting - this fellow come out, this fairy. He says,

"Do you want a drink? Here's the buttermilk you were talking about." And the feller wished he had the buttermilk, he wouldn't drink it, but the other feller drunk all he could of it. And the feller didn't drink the buttermilk, he didn't have any luck afterwards. And the feller drunk the buttermilk, he had luck long's he lived. He was happy in the world. And the feller didn't want the buttermilk, he didn't drink it, he falled back.

Told by Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, N.S., and recorded by Helen Creighton, August 196.

Question: You have a long story?

Answer : Yes, about Jack the Lanteren. Did you ever hear about Jack the Lanteren, long ago? Well there was one man once, you know, he - they got married. He wasn't very good in the world anyway. He was in an ~~old~~ new world, I 'spose about a thousand years back and it was long ago. Well he said he wished ~~his~~ ^{the devil himself} ~~hand~~ would come and give him some ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and give him some money or something. After a little while he seen a man walking up from the shore, up the road.

"You wished for me?" he told Jack, "to-day."

He said yes.

"Well I'm the devil," he said, "and you go and look in your cash box behind your bed and it's full of gold, and you've got to go with me at the end of the year," he said, "you got to go."

I said I would. Well that was good enough. He went, and one look in the cash box and here was lots of gold. Ah he was having a great time; he used to ^{oo} ~~be~~ ^w ~~backsmith~~ tools in his forge; he worked in the forge. Oh he was getting along fine, and lots of money and lots of everything to eat and everything you want to live on, but at the end of the year Mr. Devil came.

"You going with me to-day?"

"Oh," he says, "I got to go home first, before I go with you, see my wife and children."

"All right," he says, "come on. (I was a little astray). A little man came to him to make a lot of work at the forge. This was before the devil came back. I made a little mistake there. And they worked for about a couple of days.

"Well," he says, "now look mister, what do you want? Three wishes, do you say sir, or the money for the work?"

"I'll take the three wishes," he says. "All right."

"Well," he says, "when I'll tell a man to catch this hammer," he says and straighten the handle, the hammer stick to the handle, and the handle stick to the block and the block ~~stick~~ to the floor and the floor ~~stick~~ sticks to the earth," and he couldn't move it out of that.

"That's done for," he said. "That's good enough."

"Well the next wish I want to do," he said, "when I get a man to sit down in my rocking chair at home," he says, "I can keep him there. He will stick to the rocking chair. The rocking chair will stick to the floor and the floor will stick to the earth and ~~xxxx~~ there he couldn't move."

"That's right," he said.

"Well the next wish I want," he says, "if I get the devil to fit in a fifty cent piece I can carry him around ^{for a lifetime} in me pocket."

"That's done for you," he said. "All right."

Well at the end of the year, Mr. Devil he came. "You going with me to-day Jack?"

"Yes, I'm going with you to-day, but I got to go ^{over} to the forge," he says. He went to the forge. He told the devil,

"You beat out that piece or iron for me," he says. "You want to get back home." Well that was all right, and he started hammering. He gave the hammer one blow with the iron and didn't he get stuck to the handle, and the handle stuck to the anvil, and the anvil stuck to the floor, and the floor stuck to the earth and he couldn't move. He was there for about a week hollerin' and screechin' ^{in town} and everybody ^{in town} was that scared they wouldn't dare come out of the ~~xxxx~~ doors of the house..... Well he went down where he was at.

"Hello devil," he says.

"Hello," the devil says, "What do you took me, keepin' me

here," he says.

"Oh I'm keeping you there," he says, "you got to give me another year before I let you clear," he says.

"Sure," he says, "I'll give you another year. Let me out of here.

He says, "Go ahead." He went out through the roof; took half the roof with him, and every time after that when they' fix the hole when the night come, the morning open the same as ever. Could ~~xxxx~~ ~~fixxxx~~ never close up the hole.

Oh Mister Old Jack he was going around here ^{and} there and another year came to ~~an~~ ^{the} end. "Well," he said, "look." At the end of the year he came.

"Well," he said, "look Mister." He was ~~in~~ the old store he had.

"Come on with me to-day. You're not going to ~~xxxx~~ me to-day like you ~~xxxxxx~~ me the other day." ^{trick}
^{tricked}

"Ah no, I won't ~~xxxx~~ you at all," he said. "But ^{trick} come on with me to home," he said. "I got to put on me clothes so I can go with you."

"All right," he says, "I'll go with you." He says,

"Sit down on that chair." He sat down on the chair; he stuck to the chair. The chair stuck to the floor and the floor stuck to the earth, and here he was and he couldn't move, not a stir.

"You comin' now?" he told the old devil.

"Not a smoke. I can't get out of here," he said. They all left the house, left him there, screechin' and hollerin', and like his tongue was out about a foot from his mouth from hollerin', no

getting clear. But old Jack come in.

Well Jack told him, "Give me another year," he says, " and I'll let you clear.

"All right," he says, "I'll give you another year. "

"Go ahead," he said. He made one jump^{and} out through the loft and out through the roof he went to a nice house, and they closed the hole in the day and the night would close in and it would be open in the morning. Had to leave there. Well that was all right Jack was getting old you know, running here and ~~running~~ there and having a good time drinking and having great fun. My God Almighty look here. He came.

"Well you're not getting home vto-day," he said. "You're going with me."

"I'll go with you," he said. They were going walking down the road there in the town , and there were a barroom.

"Well," he said, "I'd like to have a drink of rum," he said. "I'm getting thirsty."

"All right," he says.

"I got no money," he says, Jack told him. "They says all the time that the devil goes in every kind of shape there is in the world. Will you go in a fifty cent piece?" he told the devil.

"Yes," he says, "I'll go in a fifty cent piece." When he won his fifty cent piece he put it in his pocket book and he turned back the road. He was home for maybe fifty years; he was getting to be an old man . His purse was getting heavier and getting big and getting heavier . At last he couldn't hardly carry it. The devil was swelling up in his pocket book. He went and he got twelve or thirteen of the strongest men he could find , a big hammer apiece, he got them and he took them in the forge, and he laid the pocket book on top of the anvil and started hammering onto it. They were hammer-

int there for about half a day. At last they cut a hole in the pocket book and he got out . The devil got out of the pocket book. He jumped clear and he took the forge and everything in a big pond of water, and no more end of the devil. Well anyway he went, he was getting old. He was always worrying, his children, always strayed away and his wife died and he was all alone.

"Well," there's no use try to get to hell and less to heaven," he said. He started travellin'. He was goin', goin' there for a good many days and at last he got to two branches of a road. One road was going east, the other was going west. He took the road was going west and it didn't go very far anyway. He got at the gates of heaven anyway. Oh was an angel met him in the gate.

"Don't come here," he said. "You're too bad to come in here," he said. "You can't get over these gates; go back where you came from. Won't let you in here; ~~xxxxxxx~~ he drove him away. Well, he said he'd go the other road. He went the other road, there he was going for a piece, the other branch was going east. He went about a few miles. They got a big big wire fence. He's seen a man comin' limpin', one elbow and one knee.

"Are you Hoare's (or whore's) son?" he said. "Don't come in here, because," he said, "don't you remember the day you tricked me the three times, and you pretty ~~xxxx~~ near killed me the last time," he said. "You hammered me all to pieces, you broke me leg, you broke me arm," he said. "But the I'll give to you" he says, "I'll use a spark of fire. You're between hell and heaven and all over the world," he said, "every spark of fire seen in the night, that's you," he said. "We'll call you Jack the Lanteren."

he says, and I never know more about it.

That one you can call it a story!

Question: Now where did you learn that?

Answer: Never mind.

Told ~~him~~ by Mr. Rory McKinnon, Sugar Loaf, Cape Breton, N.S. and
recorded by Helen Creighton, August 1961/