

Entertainment – Cinema - Dances

A lot of people could sing a song. I used to sing a song myself every now and again, I sang one in England when I was in England, you went up, there was just a microphone and you went up to the microphone, they would only do it if there was a few of us together, got a microphone and sang a song and come down and they would clap you, and before you would know a whole rake of you would be watching whatever you were drinking, five or six fella's might come down with a pint, and before you would know it, they enjoyed the song and you would have five or six pints sitting in front of you, that was nice.

But usually you would be in the house and they would have a game of cards about half nine or ten O'clock, and then first stop, and then everybody would go home, but we played for money you know, and the old boys, some old boys would have half a crown and they'd have kept it on purpose, they would, when you won again they would say, "your one and a bit or two and a bit" and some put a bit in their pocket, you would never get, there was drink in some of them, I would think, and they would have no change on purpose. But it was in good fun, good value, some of the old boys. I would have played with mainly older men, older than myself, they were, some of them were good fun, listening to them piping at each other. There was no house at all that time had a wireless then. I remember the first house getting a wireless from beside us, I think I was at school, they were all with batteries then, there was no electric in any of the houses. The gramophone was on of them that you had to wind it up.

The cinema they were nearly all black and white in my young days, but some of the films were very good, you know, the 'Bronte Sisters' books that they wrote. I went a couple of times a week into the cinema, just me and another brother, and myself, we used to go in on the bikes, there was a good film on I think something like 'Holiday Inn' usually when the music had started, usually there was an MC there to call out, the next dance was going to be: 'Old Time Waltz' or a 'Quick Step' or 'Fox Trot' whatever, and usually if you were a good dancer a girl would

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be looking across at you, and you would only have to nod, she would meet you then in the middle of the floor. But if you weren't a good dancer, you would have bother getting a dance. Some of them, there wasn't much music in. Couldn't dance, getting a woman to dance you, you would have to ask three or four maybe, but I was lucky enough, I was a fairly good dancer, I had no problems, and then there would be 'Lady's Choice' half hour, then the ladies who liked you would come for you then, dance again, sometimes there would be ones you would think would come for you, but it would be someone else, so that would have been a disappointment. But the dances were lovely too, 'Irish Ballroom', some great dancers in it, like the dancing you would see on the television, not the dancing they do these times you know. When the slow dancing used to be on, it was lovely dancing, can't dance now the way they used to be able to dance.

There were rows now and again, but it wasn't too bad. I never was in a fight in my life in a dance hall at all, but I saw plenty of boys that were but, it was usually over a girl. Someone fancied one girl and she was probably playing them along. There was no drink at all. There was no bars or anything in the dance halls. Occasionally I would have a wee drop of drink from the age of twenty or twenty one, it would only have been a bottle of stout or two. I took many a drink in the years after that, like a whiskey and a beer, both the wife and I go out and have three or four drinks, and a few dances, she likes a wee drink as well. You wouldn't be out that very often because money was scarce. I snared rabbits to get money, it was a good price for rabbits when I was a young fella, plenty of rabbits in the country. So I would snare them. I would make a lock of shillings that way as well.

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