

CROMWELL'S TOUR OF IRELAND

"TO HELL OR TO CONNAUGHT"

A PLAY WITH MUSIC

BY

TOM O'BRIEN

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characters

Cromwell

Hastings

Wandering Minstrel

Preacher

Emir

Eithne

Various Soldiers

Oliver Cromwell landed at Ringsend, Dublin on the 15th August 1649, with orders to put down the Catholic rebellion. He had the might of the English Parliament and his New Model army behind him, and he was fresh from his success in the English Civil War, where one of his last acts was to oversee the beheading of King Charles.

And he believed he had God on his side.

He stayed in Ireland a mere nine months, but by then he had already decided there was only one place for the troublesome Papists - Hell or Connaught!

We see his journey through Ireland through his own eyes, those of his Puritan soldiers, and of two girls, Emir and Eithne, who, having been captured at the battle of Drogheda, are now being forced to work in the kitchens before being shipped off as slaves to the West Indies.

Emir is hiding a big secret; she is a spy for Owen Roe O'Neill's Ulster army, the one great hope of defeating Cromwell. She plans to poison him, little knowing that Cromwell's own agents have a similar plan for O'Neill.

When Eithne is raped by one of the Puritan soldiers, both plan to escape and join the defenders at Limerick, where O'Neill's Ulster army is making a last desperate stand.

CROMWELL'S TOUR OF IRELAND was first performed at the Courtyard Theatre, London N1 6EU from 3rd November 2010 to 23rd November 2010. Cast were as follows: Tim Skelton, Kevin Potton, Matt Lord, Robert Toretto, Cameron McGarva, Robin Kirwan, Amanda Docherty, Dervla Toal, Clare Langford. Directed by Owen Nolan. Produced by London Irish Theatre.

Review by Drogheda Independent:

OLIVER Cromwell's attack on Drogheda and its aftermath has formed the basis for an exciting new London-based stage play, but with a goal to travel Ireland, starting by the Boyneside.

'Cromwell's Tour of Ireland' is no stereotypical, historic drama. This is a musical based on the man himself and drawing some inspiration from Tom Reilly's controversial book, which promoted Cromwell as an 'honourable enemy'.

The play, which enjoyed a run at the Courtyard Theatre in London up to last week, portrays Cromwell's staunch religious beliefs as his driving force during his Irish crusade and attempts to undercover the man behind the man, something writer Tom O'Brien knows will cause controversy.

'It puts both sides of the story across and in many ways the audience decides his real character,' Tom stated.

The story may be over 300 years old but this play is a fresh, new look at Cromwell. The characters wear modern dress, the man himself clad in a black leather jacket and his side-kick, Hastings, in a suit, depicting the politician in him.

'The whole idea came to me in Dingle years ago,' Tom continued. 'I'd bought Tom Reilly's book about the character and drawing on that and my own observations I brought it to the stage. I don't recall a play about Cromwell, especially not one like this.' The play has been produced by the London Irish Theatre with Owen Nolan directing. It has a cast of eight with Tim Skelton, who has featured in such shows as Guys and Dolls and Annie, playing the lead.

One of the foremost young Irish actors in Britain at the moment, Amanda Doherty from Derry, plays the role of Emir who along with Eithne (Dervla Toal) are captured by Cromwell's troops hiding in the crypt of St Peter's Church.

They are lined up to be removed as slaves to the West Indies but the story takes a twist towards the end of the 90 minute production.

References to Drogheda feature throughout the production, from Arthur Aston to the massacre at St Peters, Cromwell describing it as 'great mercy' while in another scene he declared that he had 'no wish to take the lives of innocent civilians'.

Tom O'Brien's desire is now to see the play take to the road in Ireland in 2011.

'I think it would appeal to Irish audiences, especially in places like Drogheda, Wexford and Limerick and it would have to start in Drogheda,' he added. 'Naturally sponsorship would be vital for the show and any assistance would be great.'

Tom can be contacted for more details at tomobrien2004@yahoo.co.uk.

- Hubert MURPHY

Act one

A bare stage. Dark backdrop. (Perhaps images of war can be shown at intervals. Such as scenes from the film 'Cromwell') There should be a room divider upstage, which can be dragged into position when needed. The actors should be in modern dress; the soldiers in battledress, Cromwell wearing a black leather jacket; Hastings perhaps wearing dark suit and tie, the preacher wearing a dog-collar. The ordinary soldiers could carry staves. I see the wandering minstrel as a sixties figure; jeans etc, wearing a headband, He sings and plays the guitar or mandolin. The girls may be dressed in the period

Scene one

A 'classroom'. English soldiers are being taught how to recognize Irish Catholics A preacher is lecturing them, holding a 'tail' in his hand.

PREACH: You must be like the conquerors of Jerico; kill all that are.
Young men and old, children and maidens. And when you are
inside the city walls you must take up a child and use it as a
buckler of defense to keep yourself from being shot or
brained . Let not your work finish till the city's gutters
run red with rivulets of blood
They are Papists, they are spawn of the Devil.
(he sticks the tail to his behind)
See! That's how you recognize 'em. By their tails. Six inches
at least. Every Irish papist 'as one.

SOLD 1: It's true. At Rathmines we put dozens to the sword, and several
had tails this long *(he indicates)*

SOLD 2: What about their padres? 'Ave they got 'em?

PREACH: Priests. They're called priests. They 'ave 'em even longer.
Twelve inches or more. Now, you gets five pounds for every
one of them you brings in *(pause)* Dead or alive.

SOLD 2: The only good papist is a dead 'un...

PREACH: We must fear and love God; his teachings tell us that
the Court of Rome is now full of vipers, hypocrites and
children of the devil. And that its Church, formerly the most
holy of all Churches, has become the most lawless den
of thieves, the most shameless of brothels, the very kingdom

of sin, death and hell so that not even the antichrist, if he were to come, could add to its wickedness.

SOLD 1: He be fiery, that Paisley.

SOLD 2: The preacher? He's not Paisley.

SOLD 1: Oh, I thought his name be Paisley.

SOLD 2: No, no...he **comes** from Paisley.

PREACH: So we are come to ask an account of the innocent blood that has been shed in the great Popish massacres of our people in this country, and to endeavour to bring to account all who by appearing in arms shall justify the same.

At this point the soldiers appear drunk, singing, each with a tankard in his hand

SOLDIERS: *Oh, we Roundheads and the Irish should be friends
Oh, we Roundhead and the Irish should be friends.
They may have horns and tails
But we likes their Irish ales*

Oh, we Roundheads and the Irish should be friends

PREACH: You two! What blasphemies do you sing about?
(he takes the tankards)

And these...concoctions of the Devil's brew!

(he empties the tankards)

Wherefore did you steal them?

Or perhaps some Papist bribed you for his life?

SOLD 3: No bribes – nor would any be accepted, your worship
We did our duty as soldiers of God.

(pause)

It was thirsty work...we helped ourselves to a little of their...fare.

PREACH: You dare call yourselves soldiers of God? Drunkenness, lechery, all the abominations of the flesh, how be you fit to carry out God's work?

SOLD 3: I dispatched five papists this very day. All are shaking hands with Lucifer right now, I'll wager.

SOLD 4: Aye, and me, too. Five more. Every one of them a heathen.
And one wore a tail this long. *(indicates)*

PREACH: Well... let us have no repetition of this. Or you may be shaking hands with Lucifer yourselves.

And now let us pray for steadfastness in our preparations for my Lord Cromwell's visit...

A WANDERING MINSTREL enters. He acts as narrator throughout the performance. He sings, plays the guitar/accordion etc, and generally carries the story forward.

MINSTREL:

Let's hear it for Owen Roe O'Neill

(sings)

*Owen Roe...Owen Roe...marching down the Glen
A thousand foe came down behind
but he chased them back again*

Owen Roe O'Neill, the finest soldier Ireland ever produced. Remember Benburb, Mister Cromwell, where General Munroe and his army of Scots were going to put a stop to Owen Roe's gallop?

(sings)

*Munroe had his thousands arrayed at his back
With their puritan mantles, steel Morion and Jack
And with him fierce Conway and Blayney had come
To crush Owen Roe at the roll of a drum*

(drum roll)

*We kept all that noontide, the foemen at play
Though we thought of their forays and burned for the fray
For our chief bade us wait, till the eve had begun
Then rush on the foe with our backs to the sun*

(another drum roll)

*There was panic before us and panic beside
As their horsemen fell back in a wild broken tide
And we swept them along by the Blackwater shore
Till we reddened its tide with the Puritans' gore.*

(more drum rolls)

Oh aye. Remember it well.

When the Battle of Benburb was over, the Blackwater river was littered the Puritan dead who had perished with the sun in their eyes. Owen Roe had outmaneuvered them, then lured them in to a trap, driving them before him into the swirling depths of the Blackwater.

Owen Roe was the man for Cromwell, alright. Everyone in Ireland knew that.

Mind you, the new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was well aware of his prowess as a fighter and leader of men, honed on the

battlefields of Spain, and knew he could expect a hot reception, when – if – they met. Forewarned was forearmed was his motto – and he had some plans in store for Owen Roe. (*he taps his nose*)

Scene two

Roars of cannon and shouts of enthusiastic crowd as Cromwell lands at Ringsend, on the outskirts of Dublin, on Aug 15th 1649. OVLIVER CROMWELL enters, accompanied by an aide, (HASTINGS)

HAST: You must speak some words of greeting, my Lord.

CROM: So be it. (*pause*) God has brought me hither in safety by Divine Providence to restore to you all your just liberties and properties, which are much trodden-down by those unblessed Papist-Royalist combinations, and the injuries of war. Our hearts and affections are real for the carrying on of this great work against the barbarous and bloodthirsty Irish and their confederates, and for propagating Christ's Gospel and establishing of Truth and Peace, and restoring this bleeding nation to its former happiness and tranquility.

The Jesuits, the Vatican's storm troops, are on the march, trying to recover the ground lost in the Reformation. Europe is awash with priests, friars and monks. And nowhere more so than here. The fight is the battle against Popery. The Royal House of the Stuarts sided with Rome and we broke them. Now we must break their influence here in Ireland.

Loud cheering for the speech.

CROM: This rapturous welcome for a Republican?

Methinks I have landed in the wrong country

HAST: Dublin is the second city of the English Empire my Lord.

We are among friends here. Lieutenant General Jones has seen to that.

CROM: Indeed. They tell me the Marquis of Ormond besieged Dublin with an army of seventeen thousand. And Jones routed his whole army. Four thousand killed and three thousand taken prisoner. This is an astonishing mercy. The Lord fills our souls with thankfulness, that our mouths may be full of his praise. And grant that we may never forget His goodness to us.

HAST: The Papists have been driven out. They are scattered to the four corners of this miserable country

CROM: To Hell or to Connaught, that's where they are bound. Tell me, what news of O'Neill?

HAST: He awaits your arrival with...interest my Lord.

CROM: Not with trepidation?

HAST: O'Neil has seen too much in the Spanish wars to shake before anyone, I fear.

CROM: A worthy opponent then. Nevertheless, we must put a stop to any moves he makes to leave Ulster

HAST: We are working on a plan my Lord. I expect him to be... incapacitated before very long.

CROM: Good, good. Now forward to...to...Treedagh?

HAST: It is called Drogheda, my Lord

CROM: Who defends this...Drogheda?

HAST: Sir Arthur Aston.

CROM: His strength?

HAST: They say about three thousand foot.

CROM: Aston? I remember him. A Royalist, and a Papist.
And what is worse- an English one!
He almost lost his head to Essex at the battle of Reading.
Methinks he loses it here.
And what of Ormonde? I hear he has forbidden the defenders to capitulate upon any terms save the language of the sword, and on all occasions to fight to the last man.

HAST: The Marquis of Ormonde has charged Aston with the town's defense my Lord. He has quartered some twenty miles away.

CROM: Will he engage?

HAST: Our agents think not my Lord.

CROM: Hah! Does he think it some spectator sport he partakes in? Or maybe he thinks we shall meet our match, and awaits the moment he can move in for the kill. Methinks he waits in vain.
What do you make of Ireland, Hastings?

HAST: It's an enigma my Lord. I have heard it called a land of saints and scholars, but I don't see much of either vocation.

CROM: Hah! This place is melting pot, Hastings. There are Catholics of the Pale, demanding freedom of religion; there are Old-Irish Catholics, under the Papist Nuncios; there is O'Neill demanding repeal of the Union; there are the Royalists of the Episcopalian and other creeds, strong for King and Covenant. There are the Ulster and other Presbyterians, and who knows how many more. And Ormonde presides over all and sundry. They have been butchering each other for the past decade, and now all are apparently united to fight us.

Savages every one of them - and do you know what they dare call us?
The Regicides. Yes, the Regicides.
Tell me, Hastings, what have we let ourselves in for?
(he kneels down and prays)
Come, let us give thanks to the Lord.
Oh Lord thou knowest how busy I must be this day
If I should forget thee, do not thou forget me.

BOTH: Amen.

Insistent beat of the bodhran. Sounds of battle; cannon fire, clash of steel, screams, smoke, the soldiers stamping their staves, etc. Cromwell bangs on garrison door.

CROM: Sir Arthur Aston! Surrender! Surrender or bring the judgment of God on yourself and those barbarian wretches you command.

VOICE: The man that can take Drogheda can take Hell itself.

CROM: Then to Hell you are bound, Sir Arthur. Surrender, I say!

Silence from within.

CROM: On your head be the consequences, Sir Arthur. Forward men!

More sounds of battle, smoke, and screams from the massacre of those within the walls. We hear the chorus from BRUCE SPRINGSTEENS'S 'NO SURRENDER' being sung.

Lights flash and gunfire echoes then Cromwell emerges triumphant, blood on his sword.

CROM: *(kneeling)*

It has pleased God to bless this endeavour at Drogheda, where the enemy were about three thousand strong. I believe we have put to the sword the whole number.

We came as soldiers of God the Just, terrible as Death, relentless as doom, doing God's judgment on the enemies of God.

In this very church of St Peter, a thousand of them we put to the sword, fleeing hither and thither for safety.

This has been a great mercy. I wish that all honest hearts may give the glory of this to God alone, to whom indeed the praise of this mercy belongs...

(he rises)

Let today be a salutary warning to those who think that a land overrun with Sanguinary Quacks can be healed by sprinkling it with rose-water. Those who live by the sword must surely die by it...

Enter TWO GIRLS, pushed ahead of Hastings. They are disheveled, and their clothes are stained with blood

GIRL I: Murderers! Rapists! Slayers of women and children!
The curse of Maeve be on you and your descendants for eternity

HAST: They were hiding in the crypt my Lord.

GIRL 2: Have mercy on us, sir.

HAST: The correct form of address to the Lord Lieutenant is 'My Lord'

GIRL 1: He is not my lord. Neither is he my King. I recognize no King except he who is of the Kingdom of heaven.

CROM: And neither do I.

GIRL 1: *(pause)* Did you look your King in the eye as you marched him to his doom in your New Republic?

CROM: Aye. And then we cut off his head with the crown upon it. As we shall sever the heads of the of the Royalist remnants that inhabit this wretched country. Up the Republic!

GIRL 1: Your republic has no lawful business in my country. Nor have the band of cut-throats and murderers you have brought with you. Owen Roe O'Neill shall have his day – and Ireland her revenge – when you cross his path, as you surely must in the not too distant future.

Cromwell looks at the girl in surprise.

CROM: By God's word, this one bodes trouble. What know you of Owen Roe O'Neill.

GIRL 1: Everyone in Ireland knows he is the finest soldier in Europe. He shall put an end to your gallop - as you shall soon find out.

CROM: Maybe not that soon. Eh, Hastings?

HAST: Yes my Lord. What shall I do with them?

CROM: Do with them? Send them to the West Indies. Where they can be weaned away from this church that we know to be the Mother of Harlots and all the abominations of the earth. Away from priestly interference, beads, holy water and holy smoke. Away from us who are the sons of the martyrs whom their church butchered.

GIRL I: Have you children, my Lord? Sons and daughters, I mean?

CROM: Four Sons and four daughters.

GIRL1: Enough so you Papists won't breed us out, anyway
And you would send them to the West Indies?
You would send your children away from you?
CROM: I would rather cut my own throat. They are the fairest brood
any man could wish for.
GIRL 1: Yet you would send us to a place as far away as...as
Heaven is from Hell.
CROM: By God, Hastings, where did you find this one?
HAST: I shall dispatch them at once, my Lord
Come, you pair...
CROM: Let them be a moment. What is your name, girl?
GIRL 1: Emer

Cromwell looks at other girl

GIRL 2: Eithne
CROM: Well, Emer and Ethne, God is merciful this day...
EMIR: Your God is a butcher
ETHNE: He is not my God
CROM: God is merciful, and in his wisdom has sent you to me.
For what purpose? Hastings?
HAST: I know not, my Lord. Perhaps he wishes their conversion.
CROM: Perhaps he does. Will you give up your allegiance to Rome? Repent and
you will be free. Repent and I will hasten you to England and not the West
Indies. There you will be given an education and chance to live a civilized
life.
Repeat after me:
'I abhor the authority of the Pope, and I firmly believe that no
reverence is due to the Virgin Mary, or any other saint in Heaven.
I assert that no worship is due to the sacrament of the Lord's
Supper. Or to the elements of bread and wine after consecration. That
transubstantiation is a lie. I believe there is no purgatory. I also firmly
believe that neither the Pope, nor any other priest can remit sin.
All this I swear'.
EMER: I believe in everything you abhor – and in the Hell where
you shall surely roast for all eternity.
I will say an act of contrition for your forgiveness...
(she kneels down, then blesses herself. After a moment so does Ethne)
BOTH: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost
Oh Heavenly Father, we are heartily sorry for having offended thee...

CROM: Hastings! Run them out – or run them through!

Hastings hustles them out of the chamber, whilst Cromwell marches distractedly about.

CROM: Who will rid me of this accursed nation of priests and sin-jobbers?

Exit all

Spotlight on Hastings, who is composing a letter

HAST: To the Governor, Barbados,
Your excellency
Concerning the young women you ask for, although we must use force in taking them up, yet it being so much for their own good, and likely to be of so great advantage to the public, it is not in the least doubted you may have such number of them as you think fit to make use upon this account. I think we can send you one thousand in this instance, and I desire to express as much zeal in this design as you would wish.
The cost will be ten guineas per head, payable as usual to the Treasury. For my own part, my expenses will be heavy, and I shall require payment of two thousand guineas to my own personal account in the usual manner. For the future, I also think it might be of advantage to your affairs there if you should see fit to accept one thousand young boys between the ages of twelve and fourteen. We could well spare them, and they would be of use to you. And who knows but that it may be the means to make them Englishmen, I mean rather Christians'.
Yes, that should do it.

(sings – to the air of **JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME**)

To the Governor of Barbados...

We'll sell them in to slavery,

The money I make will set me free,

To live a life of luxury, hurrah, hurrah.

Oliver Cromwell's the man for me, hurrah

He signs the forms that set me free

To sell them in to slavery, hurrah

Oliver Cromwell's the man for me, hurrah, ha ha

Hastings seals the letter then exits

Scene three

A room in a country house that has been commandeered by the Cromwellian forces on their march towards Wexford. Emir and Eithne are its only occupants. Eithne is at the window. She sees some soldiers dragging a bound and gagged figure across the yard.

EMIR: Quickly! What can you see?

EITHNE: The soldiers, they are all cheering and jeering. Another group are arriving on horseback. They are dragging someone behind. I think he is a priest. He is wearing his cassock. It is all bloodied. He is bound with ropes. Now they are dragging him towards the bonfire. Oh... I cannot look anymore....
(she comes away from the window and hold hands to her face. She blesses herself)

Spotlight on the wandering minstrel

MINST: *(sings)*
Ho! brother Tadgh what is your story?
I went to the wood and shot me a Tory
I went to the wood and shot me another
Who was a priest and was his brother

I hunted him in, I hunted him out,
Through the bog and round and about
Till out of a bush I spied his head
So I leveled my gun and shot him dead!

Oh yes, they liked their ‘rest and recreation’, did Cromwell’s men.
(pause)

Now, you might be forgiven for thinking that a Tory was an English gentleman. You would be wrong. The name Tory derives from the Irish word *torridh*, a pursued person. They were usually Irish soldiers or priests

on the run. They faced exile or death if they gave themselves up, so they hid out in the hills and mountains.

Cromwell's soldiers regarded it as good days sport to go up into the hills and bag a few. A day spent hunting them could be very rewarding financially. Officially worth five pounds a head, a bishop or a really popular priest could fetch up to twenty pounds. After capture, some were sent into exile, but many weren't that lucky

(reads)

Cashel: The Bishop of Ross, hands and feet cut off, then hanged...

Carrick-on-Suir: Dominican Friar, fingers and toes cut off, then hanged...

Clonmel: A Franciscan Friar drawn on the rack, hands and feet burnt, then hanged

Arklow: Parish Priest tied to wild horses, dragged to Gorey, then hanged

Oh yes, they liked their R and R.

Return to Emir and Eithne. They are on their knees, finishing praying for the priest's whose burning Eithne has just witnessed.

BOTH: May the Lord have mercy on him. Amen

EITHNE: What's going to happen to us, Emir?

EMIR: You heard what Mr. Hastings said. We are to be shipped to the West Indies when enough of us are gathered together.

EITHNE: Herded together like cattle or sheep. We must escape. We must run away.

EMIR: Run away to where? The countryside is awash with Cromwellian soldiers and followers. They are razing the countryside as they go. Nothing is left. No, we must bide our time. Besides, we have no families left to return to.

EITHNE: I haven't. My father, my mother, my brothers...oh God! But your family is safe. They are still in Ulster.

EMIR: Those whose roof I shared were family. Distant cousins maybe, but they were still family. And now they are all dead.

EITHNE: Maybe some escaped. Oh, I hope and pray...

EMIR: No! Everybody was massacred. We have both seen the butchery, and heard the talk. It is not idle gossip. The streets ran red with the blood of our kinfolk. Nobody escaped.

EITHNE: We did.

EMIR: Did we? Is this how we escaped? To serve Mr. Cromwell? He would as soon as run us through as look at us. We are Papists. We revolt him. You saw it in his face. But for now we are more profitable to him alive than dead. If I were a man I would kill him...

(she listens)

Shush! Someone is coming.

Two soldiers appear. One is drinking. He offers some to the other soldier. The other soldier slaps it away.

SOLDIER1: You heard my Lord Cromwell. We are soldiers of God. Drinking is an abomination. The preacher said so.

SOLDIER2: You mustn't believe all that twaddle! As for the preacher, he is a hypocrite. He drinks when he thinks nobody is looking. I mean, what else is there to do in this miserable swamp? Even for a man of God. And the only cure for the stench of all that blood and gore is a stiff drink. Or two, or three.*(picks up the bottle)* Here, brother, put some fire in your belly. It will make you forget the horrors of the day gone by.

SOLDIER1: I have no wish to forget. They are Papists. God's enemy - and my enemy.

SOLDIER2: Oh yes, your brother and his wife put to the sword in some god-forsaken hovel north of Dublin last year. I remember you telling me.

SOLDIER1: They were stripped naked along with dozens of others and herded up into the hills in the middle of winter and left there to die. These Papists are animals.

SOLDIER2: So it's revenge you are after.

SOLDIER1: I want justice. Justice for my brother and all the others who died like him. If the Papists succeed they won't stop until everyone in this country not of the Roman persuasion is buried. Dead or alive – they won't care. That's why Lord Cromwell must pound them into submission. So that they will never forget their terrible come-uppance – even in the generations to come.

SOLDIER2: Spoken like a true believer. I'm afraid I'm only here for the beer. *(he holds up his drink)* Oh, I have no objection to killing the Papist bastards – the more the merrier is what I say- but to me it's just a job. I am a soldier, it's what I get paid to do. If I wasn't doing this I would probably be mugging travelers passing out of London at Cripple Gate or Alders Gate. You think this place is bad? You want to live in a shit hole like Spittle Fields, where I come from. There's not much employment – or enjoyment - to be had around Spittle Fields, I can tell you. That's why it was a Godsend when Lord Cromwell started recruiting for his Puritan Army. I mean what had the Royalists ever done for the working classes? Apart from trampling them into the mud. That's why I loved popping those landed bastards, and now I am enjoying doing the same to their Royalist brethren over here.

SOLDIER1: You mock the cause, I think.

SOLDIER2: Oh lighten up for fuck sake. It's only a war. And we have a license to kill. I don't particularly care whether they are Papists or Royalists. Or both. This is a small country. We have the power. We have the might. We can do anything we want and they can't stop us. A little bit of pillaging and raping can make a pleasant end to the day...

SOLDIER1: No!

SOLDIER2: What's to stop us? There's no law, only our law. What's the matter? A few drinks, then a nice buxom wench to finish up...

SOLDIER1: No, I say! The Lord's bible is law...

SOLDIER2: Fuck the Lord's bible. We make the law. You stick with your soldier's prayer book. I'll stick with this...*(he waves his drink)*...and this...*(he grabs his crutch)*. My prayer is that this war lasts for another five years. And please God there will be another one to fight somewhere else by then. That way I will never have to set eyes on fucking Spittle Fields again.
(he staggers away, singing)

Oh we Roundheads and the wenches should be friends...*(exit)*

Emir and Eithne come out of hiding and make to run away. They hear some more noises and hide again.

New scene

Enter Cromwell to an adjacent room.

CROM: *(reading a letter)* Hastings! Where the devil are you!

Enter Hastings, hurriedly.

HAST: I am sorry my Lord. Some soldiers have returned with a Dominican Friar. I was settling their reward.

CROM: And how much was this one worth?

HAST: We settled on ten guineas, my Lord.

CROM: Did you indeed! A handsome purse to be sure. And how was payment made?

HAST: A promissory note to be exchanged at the end of the campaign.

CROM: Another IOU! At times it seems that my entire New Model Army is so weighed down with a mountain of promissory notes that it cannot move another mile. Already I hear rumblings of discontent.

HAST: Many will settle for land in exchange when we have secured this pestilent country.

CROM: Let us secure it quickly then. The winter is closing in on us. How does the weather?

HAST: If rain were whiskey my Lord, we would all be drunk in perpetuity. The rivers are swollen, the paths barely passable, this whole country is a quagmire.

CROM: *(he hands Hastings the letter)* Read this to me. My eyes do trouble me today. They are watery. In all honesty my whole body aches.

HAST: Perhaps you should rest my Lord.

CROM: Rest in this accursed swamp, Hastings! Hah! Read it. Quickly!

HAST: For the Lord-General Cromwell. Wexford. 3rd Oct 1649. Sir, I have received your letter of summons for delivery of this town into your hands. Which standeth not with my honour to do myself; neither will I take it upon me without the advice of the rest of the officers, and the Mayor of this corporation, this town being of great consequence to all Ireland. Whom I will call together and confer with, and return my resolution unto you tomorrow by twelve of the clock. In the meantime, if you be so pleased, I am content to forebear all act of hostility, so you permit no approach to be made. Expecting your answer in that particular, I remain, my Lord.
Your obedient servant
D Sinnott.

CROM: Do you hear that Hastings? He is content to forebear all acts of hostility. Is he indeed! He is surrounded, outnumbered, and out-manuevered. Does he wish me to kiss his Papish backside as well?

Enter Minstrel singing

MINST: *Oliver Cromwell by your name lend an ear, lend an ear
Oliver Cromwell by your name lend an ear.
Oliver Cromwell by your name, your faults I will proclaim
For the Irish you did shame and rule with fear, rule with fear.*

Old Ironsides was in a truculent mood. The weather, his health, were all conspiring against him. On the plus side he had dispatched some dragoons to Roslare Fort, some ten miles away on the other side of the harbor, and they had captured it without a shot being fired. That meant that his ships carrying his artillery could now enter the harbor without fear of attack.

Exit minstrel.

CROM: Yesterday we took the Fort here before Wexford which commands the harbor, which is now become ours.

HAST: The defenders fled in a Frigate that lay close by the fort, my Lord. I believe the fort has seven guns. There are many other ships above at the town which, if God grants us, will soon be ours. Ormonde has put only 1500 men into the town where there were 2000 before.

CROM: Here I see very good country. The best we have seen so far. We want nothing but more men to possess it. I wish more of our soldiers in England were here to become landed men. *(pause)*
Write to your masters in London. Tell them we need more men.
All our soldiers are well paid, are they not?

HAST: Indeed, my Lord, a horseman 2s 3d a day, and the foot 4s 10d weekly.

CROM: We shall have them then. *(pause)*The sea and the river are now ours; our artillery is on its way; we have 10000 foot and 3000 horse waiting impatiently on my word. And still this...this fool Sinnott treats with me. Has he not learnt the lessons of Drogheda? Does he wish Wexford to go the same way?

HAST: Sinnott is an unpopular Governor, my Lord. He was imposed on the town and the people do not like him – our agents have verified this. His posturing is at the behest of the Marquis of Ormonde, who appointed hm.

CROM: Ah yes, the renegade Presbyterian. He is now for everything that he formerly hated. For Catholics of the Pale, for Old-Irish Catholics, for Royalist Presbyterianism. Against us, whom he calls ‘the Regicides’. They are all eagerly awaiting the young Charles Second to come thither and be crowned and made victorious. I fear they will have a long wait if I have anything to do with it. His head can be removed just as easily as his father’s. *(pause)*
And where is Ormonde now? Can he muster a large force?

HAST: Our agents are gathering information as we speak, my Lord. They say his troops are ill- trained and poorly armed. He cannot pay for what he requires, so he is without. They tell me he is heading for the far side of the estuary with about 2000 foot and horse.

CROM: So. He hopes to cross the river there and lift the siege. *(laughs)* Which river we now hold. I will dispatch Jones with 1500 foot and horse at once. I’ll wager Ormonde will reverse his march with all the haste he can muster when our Roundheads appear upon his horizon. Ormonde doesn’t fight, he postures. And now that his proposed alliance with O’Neill has been scuppered he doesn’t even do that well. Tell me, what latest news have we of O’Neill?

HAST: Our agents have succeeded in placing a pair of poisoned boots amongst his possessions. I believe he has taken a liking to them.

CROM: And his state of health?

HAST: He still lingers, my Lord. His doctors can do no more, I am told. His death will be slow and painful

CROM: I will tell you, Hastings, the one man in the whole of Ireland I truly feared was O'Neill. An alliance between him and Ormonde would have made this campaign almost unwinnable. The lord has been truly merciful. Let us give him thanks. (*he kneels and they pray for a few moments*) And now, let us continue this game with Sinnott, while we await our artillery...

HAST: Will he surrender, my Lord?

CROM: I know his game, Hastings. He is playing for time. He is hoping for Ormonde to come to his aid. Well, we have fixed that, have we not?

HAST: Yes, my Lord.

CROM: Ormonde will not get within a donkey's roar of Wexford town. (*Hastings looks at him oddly*)

HAST: I think the expression is asses roar my Lord.

CROM: Well, within an asses roar, then. (*pause*) I must say Hastings that you show a certain familiarity with the workings of this place.

HAST: My work in the past has taken me here on several occasions.

CROM: Ah yes, you were a...procurer, were you not?

HAST: I procured workers for the West Indies my Lord, if that is what you mean. It provided handsome rewards for the exchequer.

CROM: And perhaps for you too, eh Hastings?

HAST: I had...expenses, my Lord.

CROM: No doubt. (*pause*) You are a consummate politician, Hastings.

HAST: No politician my Lord. I am merely a servant of Parliament.

CROM: A consummate public servant then. And when you were assigned to me some...ten months ago now isn't it?...what was your brief?

HAST: Brief, my Lord?

CROM: Were you sent to spy on me?

HAST: Certainly not my Lord.

CROM: What then?

HAS: My instructions were to assist you...to facilitate you.

CROM: And whom is your allegiance to?

HAST: My allegiance is to you my Lord. (*in an aside*) At least until this campaign is won
(*he speaks directly to the audience*)

Then I can get back to the proper business of making hay while I can. The career I choose is short enough; I expect to get another five good years, then...*(he shrugs)* It's okay for the likes of...Mr. Cromwell. He is a fanatic, all his followers are fanatics. They sing hymns as they march into battle! Sing hymns! Greater love hath no man...and all that. I have never had faith like that. Never will have. So I make the best of what I have got. The trouble with fanatics is that they are too...fanatical. Mr. Cromwell is this year's flavor of the month. Next year - or the one after - it will be somebody else. The trick is knowing when to latch onto them - and when to detach yourself - without losing your head.

(returns to dialogue with Cromwell)

I am your humble servant, my Lord.

CROM: Hmm! Never trust a political careerist is what I believe. *(pause)*

Tell me, what manner of man do perceive before you?

HAST: You, my Lord? *(Cromwell nods)* I think you may yet be the finest man in all England. Indeed, I have heard it whispered in high places.

CROM: *(laughs)* Hah! Did your masters tell you I was the chief of sinners. Drinking, gambling, debauchery. My life, my very existence was in the darkness. Everything was black despair. I wrestled...God knows I wrestled with my demons...for many years. And then at last...I saw the light.

Enter minstrel

MINST: *(sings)*

*He wandered so aimless his life filled with sin
He wouldn't let his dear savior in
Then Jesus came like a stranger in the night
Praise the Lord he saw the light*

*He saw the light, He saw the light.
No more darkness, no more night
Now He's so happy no sorrow in sight
Praise the Lord he saw the light*

CROM: All this...everything I have done has been the Lords work. The victories not mine, not my army, but God's. He showed me the way. At Reading, at Nazeby, at Edgehill. And he will show me the way here. The Pope is the antichrist and his disciples are the devil's disciples. This is a just war and we will win it with God on our side.

MINST: *(sings- to the air of God On Our Side)*

Oh the history will tell it
And tell it so well
The Puritans charged
And the Papists they fell
The Puritans charged
And the Papists they died
And the country was saved
With God on its side.

During this scene Emir and Eithne have been listening in on some of the conversation.

Cromwell realizes somebody is by the door so he signals Hastings to continue singing, then goes to the door and opens it suddenly. The girls fall in the opening at his feet.

CROM: By jove Hastings, what have we here! I thought we had dispatched this pair to the Caribbean.

HAST: They are awaiting transportation, my Lord. When we take Wexford we will find a suitable vessel. The place is full of privateers and pirates, I believe, so a vessel should be available.

CROM: Pirates, yes. They are the scourge of English Channel. Their booty would fill the warehouses on the quays ten times over, and their fine ships line the slipways. All plundered from British and other merchant ships plying their legitimate trade on the seas highways. I believe their tables would do justice to the finest in London. Well, no longer. We shall put some manners on them. *(he looks at Eithne and Emir)* How come these two are not with the others awaiting transport?

HAST: Some help was needed in the kitchens my Lord. They were sent.

CROM: Indeed? Sent to spy, perhaps? There are spies everywhere in this God forsaken place. Who sent you?

EMIR: Nobody sent us, my Lord. It is as Mr. Hastings said. We were brought to help in the kitchens.

CROM: And yet I find you with your ears to my keyhole.

EITHNE: We were not listening to you, my Lord. It is such a big house we were lost, merely trying to find our way back to the kitchens. I swear to God.

CROM: Your God has aligned himself with the vipers nest that is Rome. He is of no consequence to me. *(pause)* Your compatriots butchered thousands of our Puritan brethren in Ulster during the past eight years. I was told of

hundreds of innocents herded naked up into the hills, where they perished like wild animals.

EITHNE: They took our land.

EMIR: They *STOLE* our land.

CROM: The remedy is yours. Renounce Rome and your land shall be yours again. Renounce Rome and all its pomp and the whole of Ireland shall be your Kingdom.

EMIR: Your war is not a just war. It's an act of revenge. No matter how your fine words may cloak it.

EITHNE: Ulster is right and Ulster will fight.

CROM: Ulster will submit, like the rest of this wretched island. Show them the way back, Hastings. I must attend to the placing of the big guns.

Exit Cromwell

HAST: Come, the kitchens are through here. Hurry.

EITHNE: What is to become of us, Mr. Hastings?

HAST: You will be put on a ship bound for the West Indies in due course. There you will be given an education, and be among civilized people.

EMIR: There we will be slaves. I would rather be dead here among my own people. Wouldn't you, Eithne?

HAST: You will, of course, be expected to repay the cost of your education and passage. This will take some time... say five years. But then...

EMIR: Like I said, slaves. My people are Earls and Chieftains.

HAST: Are the indeed? And what are their names?

EMIR: They are proud Ulster names. They are...

EITHNE: Emir!

EMIR: Their names are...legend.

HAST: Tell me their names and I will hasten a messenger. Perhaps you can be returned to Ulster rather than shipped to the Barbados.

EITHNE: No Emir. It's a trick.

HAST: No trick, I assure you. But perhaps some arrangement can be made.

EMIR: What arrangement?

HAST: A financial one.

EMIR: You want a ransom paid!

HAST: Not ransom. Rather a...finders fee. Surely you would welcome that? Both of you of course.

EITHNE: And what if Lord Cromwell were to hear of this... this deviousness?

HAST: From you pair! My dears, why should he believe anything you say? I, on the other hand, have his ear constantly. He will believe anything I tell him

about you. Anything. You could be witches. Perhaps I shall say you are witches. Europe is awash with them these times. What say you to that?

EMIR: What is it you want, Mr. Hastings.

HAST: Me? I want for nothing. I shall soon unburden myself of this squalid little outcrop. When it has served its purpose. But you need friends. A friend.

EMIR: You!

EITHNE: I would rather be friends a baboon.

HAST: Why you ungrateful little... *(he grabs her face with one hand)* Your one saving grace is your face. Such a pretty one you are.

EMIR: I think he has taken a fancy to you Eithne.

EITHNE: Let me go. You disgust me.

HAST: Oh no my dear, you don't get off that easily. I suggest you be nice to me. If you know what's good for you.

EITHNE: Hah! My people will kill you.

HAST: Your people are dead. You have said so.

EITHNE: I speak of the Irish people. They will avenge your butchery at Drogheda.

EMIR: Will you do to Wexford what you did to Drogheda?

HAST: Lord Cromwell is merciful. He has asked for their surrender. He has no desire to kill innocent people.

EMIR: And if they don't surrender? I have seen your big guns being dragged to the high ground out yonder.

HAST: God is good. He will grant us a great victory.

EMIR: And what of the innocent women and children within the walls?

HAST: We fight no war against women and children, or innocent civilians.

EMIR: And how can they escape? Or survive the guns? The streets of Wexford will run red just as the streets of Drogheda did.

HAST: They hold keys themselves. My lord has given Governor Sinnott his terms. They can open the gates in peace, or we shall take them in pieces. Now, enough of your idle talk. Back to the kitchens. And while you are there consider carefully my proposition. I shall expect a favourable response soon. Come now, follow me.

EITHNE: We are not your slaves. We are free-born people

The Minstrel appears and sings the song I'M A FREE BORN MAN

(note. The words are changed slightly from the original)

MINST: *I am a freeborn man of the Irish people
Got no fixed abode, with nomads I am numbered
Country lanes and byways were always my ways
Never fancied being lumbered*

*O we knew the woods, all the resting places
And the small birds sang when wintertime was over
Then we'd pack our load and be on the road
They were good old times for the rover*

*There was open ground where a man could linger
Stay a week or two for time was not your master
Then away you'd jog with your horse and dog
Nice and easy, no need to go faster*

*All you freeborn men of the Irish people
Every soldier, rolling stone, or gypsy rover
Winds of change are blowing, old ways are going
Your traveling days will soon be over*

End of act one

ACT TWO

Scene one

Wexford has fallen, the defenders have been routed, and the soldiers are in party mood. Wandering minstrel sings. Show soldiers singing along and drinking.

MINST:

*The Pope's gut his Cardinals all in a row
The lame, the blind, the duff and the dumb
They're comin' to Ireland with saint so-and-so
Tae silence the boasts of the Pruthestant drum*

*Lero, lero, all so quaro
Lut the damn Papists with sucrements come;
With our guns all akimbo, we'll send them to Limbo.
Says Oliver Cromwell and Wullie McCrum.*

*Lord Ollie's high up on his lully-white steed
Shut up the bible and run for the gun
We'll give the proud Pope and the Devil their need
And show them how Christian endeavour is done.*

*Lero, lero, do and adero
Tae Hell with the Pope and his Nuncio chum
Call all the kind neighbours and arm them with sabres
Says Oliver Cromwell and Willie McCrum*

MINST: Taking Wexford was a piece of cake. While Governor Sinnott was still negotiating surrender terms with old Ironsides, one of his own commanders agreed his own terms. Captain James Stafford, who commanded St John's Castle, the gateway to the town, open the gates and let the New Model Army in, in exchange for safe passage for himself and his men. Whether Cromwell was party to this piece of treachery has never been established; nevertheless, it happened, and the defenders inside were in complete disarray at the sight of hordes Roundheads bearing down on

them. It was all over bar the shouting. All over in one hour in fact. In that time the Cromwellians gained complete control of the town, and somewhere between 1500 and 2000 defenders lay dead in the streets, or drowned in the estuary as they tried to escape.

He watches the celebrations for a moment, then exits

SOLD 1: Did ya see them papists run! All the way to the river.

SOLD 2: Aye. Rome may'ent be built in a day, but we knocked it down in one!

SOLD 1: Praise be the Lord.

SOLD:2 And praise be our Lord Cromwell. He be there all the time, encouraging and directing us, as the big guns breached the walls.

SOLD 1: Aye. And when the hole was big enough to let a coach and horses through, he say. "make it bigger, make it big enough to get two coaches through!" And we did.

SOLD 2: Aye, the walls of Jericho come tumbling down. And they be thicker than ten papists stood side be side!

PREACH: The inhabitants of this accursed island are idol worshipping Canaanites, who were cursed by God, and so deserve to be extirpated by the sword. And never forget that we are avenging the great Papish massacres that were perpetrated on our people here in recent times. So I say happy be he that shall reward them as they served us, and cursed be he who shall do the Lord's work negligently. Cursed be he that maketh not the sword stark drunk with Irish blood.; who doth not recompense them double for their treachery to the English. Praised be he who maketh them in heaps on heaps, and their country the dwelling place of dragons.

SOLD 1: He be a cheery soul, eh? Have some ale, preacher. It be native, but it be good.

PREACH: I fear that only pure water shall ever pass my lips. But you drink soldier. Drink heartily, and make merry tonight. You fought well today.

More singing, drinking and dancing.

(singing)

Onward Cromwell's soldiers... marching off to war....

Hastings enters

HAST: Pray, attention for my Lord Cromwell.

Cromwell enters.

- CROM:** Well done my New Model Army. Last month we reduced Drogheda. Today we reduced Wexford. In a few months we will have reduced this whole God forsaken country. You fought like lion hearts today. The defenders ran before you in terror.
- SOLD 1:** Aye. With their tails between their legs.
- SOLD 2:** And some were that long. (*he indicates*)
- CROM:** It was God's Judgment. You were his armed soldiers, terrible as death, relentless as doom, wreaking his judgment on his enemies. You carried Acts of Parliament, laws of Earth and Heaven in one hand, drawn sword in the other.
- SOLDS:** Aye, we did!
- CROM:** Against you was a black ravening coil of blustering individuals whose word is grown worthless as the barking of dogs. A savage horde full of hatred, treachery and butchery.
- SOLDS:** Aye, they were!
- CROM:** Who had massacred countless of our Protestant brethren this past eight years.
- SOLDS:** Aye, they did!
- CROM:** You offered them methods of regulation and veracity, emblems the nearest we poor Puritans could make them of God's Law Book. 'Obey them', you said, 'be peaceable and true under them, it shall be well with you. Refuse to obey them, and.....'(*he looks at the soldiers*)
- SOLD 1:** 'We shall not let you continue living', my Lord.
- CROM:** Exactly. Their choice. And their choice alone. I have no desire to take the lives of those who lay down their arms. Any more than I wish to take the lives of innocent civilians. That was why I hoped that....Drogheda would have been a lesson to those who followed. Clearly, it wasn't...

EMIR AND EITHNE have been eavesdropping on the party during this last conversation. They are in another room and cannot be seen. Emir cannot contain herself any longer as Cromwell finishes speaking.

EMIR: Liar... murderer...!!

Eithne drags her away before they hear her.

EITHNE: Emir! Come away. They will hear.

EMIR: I don't care! They are butchering scum. And they dare to laugh and joke about it in there, as if... as if it was of no consequence.

EITHNE: Shh! Be still. They will catch us and hurt us.

EMIR: They have already done that. What more can they do to us now? Yes, they can kill us – but they cannot kill the dream. They can never kill the dream.

EITHNE: Sometimes I find you very strange indeed. What dream?

EMIR: Freedom. Our freedom. Our own nation once again.

EITHNE: You sound like my brother. Before he left to join up with Owen Roe O'Neill's men.

EMIR: My brothers too. All three of them. And I would have joined with them, if I hadn't been a...girl. They laughed at me when I said I wished to go with them. 'Little sister, you must stay put – and practice being gracious and womanly'. Hah! I can ride a horse and bring down a stag with the best of them. I learned from the best teacher there is. Owen Roe himself.

EITHNE: You met with Owen Roe!

EMIR: Why wouldn't I? He is my father's cousin. When he returned from the Spanish wars he stayed with us many times. He taught me to shoot and ride. I would sit entranced round the fire at night when he and father talked about the great battles they had fought; how they had succeeded at Benburb with no artillery whatsoever. They trapped General Monroe's forces with the sun in their eyes, then shouted the signal – Sancta Maria – and charged with such momentum that nothing could withstand it.

EITHNE: (*beginning to suspect something*) Why were you in Drogheda?

EMIR: I was there to visit my relations.

EITHNE: It wasn't just a family visit though, was it?

EMIR: Alright. I was there to see if it could withstand a Parliamentary attack, which was rumored to be imminent. Owen Roe would have liked to send re-enforcements, but first he needed to know the town's military strength. Cromwell attacked before I could get away.

EITHNE: Emir! Tell me! What were you doing there?

EMIR: What do you think?

EITHNE: You were a spy!

EMIR: Don't look so shocked. There are many more like me.

EITHNE: (*blessing herself*) Dei agus Mhuire agut. A spy. Oh God! If they find you out they will hang you. And me with you. But I am no spy. I have no wish to be hanged. Oh... what am I going to do....?

She is becoming hysterical. Emir shakes her then slaps her face.

EMIR: Eithne! It's alright. They won't find out. I am very careful. I have no wish to be hanged either.

EITHNE: Are you still spying?

EMIR: I do what I can. But it is difficult. There are many who have changed sides. Royalists who are now Parliamentarians. Especially Protestant ones - who have no wish to fight for a Catholic cause. I heartell there are now even some Catholics in the Puritan ranks.

EITHNE: That cannot be.

EMIR; It is true, I fear. I was shown one yesterday. This conflict has reduced many to pauperism. They have no way of feeding their families, except with a wage from an army – be it one side or the other.

EITHNE: But they are killing their own people!

EMIR: Perhaps. Or perhaps they, too, are spies.

EITHNE: How can you tell who is safe to speak with?

EMIR: We all wear a secret emblem. Recognizable only to others like us.

EITHNE: Show me.

EMIR: I cannot. It would not be safe. For me or you.

EITHNE: I cannot stay here any longer. I must get away. I no longer recognize you. You are a stranger to me.

EMIR: Do not say that, Eithne. We are like sisters. Besides, help may soon be at hand. Owen Roe has promised a large force to re-enforce the garrison at Waterford. If he comes we will surely be freed.

MINST: *(singing)*

*Cromwell's in Ireland with nothing to do
But dream of great plunder and Catholics to slew
You will in your Michael says bould Owen Rue
We'll throw you back in to the ocean.*

*The sea, oh the sea, is graw gall mac cree
Long may it roll between England and me.
It a sure guarantee that one day we'll be free
Thank God we're surrounded by water*

As the singing finishes there is a knock on the window. A note is passed through, which Emir reads

EMIR: It's Owen Roe. They have poisoned him. They have poisoned Owen Roe!
His life is slipping away

Scene two

A little later. The celebrations are continuing with the Roundheads. Cromwell is demonstrating a little dance – the Galliard - to the soldiers.

CROM: That was the Galliard, which my dear wife does love. I was a farmer long 'ere I was a soldier. We knew how to celebrate at harvest time and other occasions. A little mead, a little song, a little dance. We were not dour then, though we may seem so now. We could, and did, enjoy the gifts the Lord sent us. Everything we got – we have – came from him. That is why we must give him thanks every day. Lest we forget.

(pause)

I was the chief of sinners. Then I was arrested powerfully by the working of the Spirit of the living God, and given a vision of my depraved and corrupted heart. I saw my lost and sinful condition. And I cried out 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And from henceforth I was a Christian man, not just on Sundays but on all day, all places and in all cases. The Bible was my life's book and my Psalter my prayer book.

(He holds up a prayer book)

All of you have been issued with the Soldiers Bible. You must read from it every day.

A soldier must pray before he goes to fight.

A soldier must consider and believe God's gracious promises.

A soldier must not fear his enemies.

A soldier must love his enemies as they are his enemies, and hate them as they are God's enemies...

(As Cromwell says these words from the Bible the soldiers should join in towards the end. This clearly pleases Cromwell)

And now my soldiers I must bid you good night. I fear these old bones need a good night's rest. *(exit)*

Hastings pulls Soldier 2 aside from the celebrations.

HAST: I have need of your services, soldier. A private matter.

SOLD2: I am at your service, Mr. Hastings.

HAST: It is a... delicate matter. And needs handling with the utmost discretion.

SOLD2: Discreet is my middle name.

HAST: And the utmost secrecy.

SOLD2: My lips shall be sealed.

HAST: There is a girl... she is a servant girl in the kitchens. She has red hair...

SOLD2: A real beauty. Yes, I have seen her. Were she not a Papist...

HAST: Yes, well. I have some...business with her. I want you to fetch her to my quarters a little later. Bring her by the back entrance and make sure nobody sees you.

SOLD2: Say no more, Mr. Hastings. (*touches his nose with his finger*) Wink, wink eh.

HAST: Do not let your imagination run away with you, soldier. I believe she may have some useful information for me. Nothing more. Is that understood?

SOLD2: Of course, Mr. Hastings. (*aside*) I might believe you but thousands wouldn't.

HAST: It may be an occasional happening. Naturally, you will be rewarded for your trouble. (*he passes over some coins*) Bring her along in about an hour. (*exits*)

SOLD2: (*jingling the coins in his hand*) I'll wager he has her flat on her back before you can say 'London bridge is falling down'.

End of scene

A little later. Soldier 2 is returning to his quarters. He is has been drinking, though he is not obviously drunk. He comes across Eithne, who has decided to try and escape. She is wearing a hood and he does not recognize her at first

SOLD 2: A wench! And a buxom one too. Come here, my beauty.

EITHNE: Let me pass!

SOLD 2: What be you doing out here late at night? Be you looking for a man, eh?

EITHNE: Let me go I tell you! (*she struggles to free herself*)

SOLD 2: A fiery one! I likes my women with a bit of fight in 'em. (*at this stage her hood slips down and he recognizes her*) Well now! What a pleasant surprise. Mr. Hastings little tart I believe. What pleasure do you provide for Mr. Hastings?

EITHNE: I don't know what you speak about.

SOLD2: He charges me to bring her to him, yet she does not know what I speak of! Don't lie to me. How do you minster to him? Do you suck his cock for him?

EITHNE: Let me go you filthy swine (*she struggles with him*)

SOLD2: The ugly fat man gets his cock sucked I'll wager. Well not tonight – least not before I get mine sucked first.

Eithne screams and struggles but he is too strong. He puts his hand over her mouth,

forces her to the ground , and rapes her. During this struggle, Emir has been searching for Eithne, calling her name, etc. She eventually comes across the rape scene. She runs towards Eithne, picking up a lump of wood (tree branch), and striking the soldier several blows.

EMIR: Get off her, you animal.

Soldier 2 is too strong and slaps Emir away. Soldier 1 now arrives on the scene And sees what is going on. He grabs Soldier 2 in a half nelson, forcing him to release Eithne. Emir drags Eithne to safety, as Soldier 1 drags Soldier 2 away. (exit all)

End of scene

A court martial is taking place

HAST: There is no doubt the accused attacked the girl, then forced himself upon her. I know not what he would have stopped at if the other...servant girl had not come to her rescue.

CROM: What say you, soldier?

SOLD 2: I was drunk, my Lord. Then I see this papist whore, and she be lewd and willful. Preacher say all papists be abominations, and be evil incarnate. And that they must pay for the massacres of our brethren in Ulster

CROM: Preacher? (*this to Hastings*)

HAST: I think he means the Scottish one my Lord. His name escapes me at present.

CROM: I know of him. From Paisley, I believe. He has Lutheran leanings. He ministered to some of my army at Naseby. He puts fire in their bellies alright. Maybe too much at times.

SOLD2: It was Mr. Hastings, my Lord.

CROM: It was Mr. Hastings what?

SOLD2: He told me to fetch her.

CROM: Did he tell you to rape this...miserable wretch?

SOLD 2: No my Lord. But he say bring her to his quarters, that he had ...business with her.

CROM: Hastings? What of this?

HAST: I know not my Lord. Perhaps the fellow is delusional. Or it may be a diversionary tactic. Make accusations everywhere and perhaps one will stick. I think the fellow means me mischief.

CROM: You, soldier (*this to Soldier 1*). Do you know anything of this?

SOLD1: No my Lord. I believe it is all lies. This...creature is not fit to be a soldier of God. I believe he would have seriously injured the girl if I had not happened along.

CROM: What say you now soldier

SOLD2: Preacher say they ain't human. He say they worship the devil.

CROM: And what do I say?

SOLD 2: My Lord?

CROM: The oath you took when you joined my New Model Army? What does it say?

SOLD 2: I don't remember my Lord.

CROM: Remind him, Hastings.

HAST: I do hereby swear not to do any wrong or violence toward Country People or persons whatsoever, unless they be actually in arms or office with the enemy, or I shall answer to the contrary at my utmost peril.

SOLD 2: I did not think that rule be for Papists my Lord.

CROM: You did not think at all. I do not suffer charlatans in my army. There is one rule, and that one rule is for everyone. I will not tolerate looters or pillagers, or slayers of innocent people, or rapists in my army.

What do you say to that?

SOLD 2: I say that the Papists of this country are an abomination

CROM : You are a rapist, condemned by your own words. You, too, are an abomination. I hereby sentence you to death.

Take him away.

(as soldier 2 is led away, struggling)

Let it be a public spectacle. Let others be in no doubt that I mean what I say.

New scene

MINST: Old Ollie meant what he said alright. Trouble was, people didn't yet believe it. Witness what happened at Drogheda. Surrender and you will be saved. No surrender, and we will hunt you down and kill you like a rabid dog. Still, after Wexford, most were getting the message. Ross, Duncannon, Passage, they all fell with hardly a shot being fired in anger. Although Carrick on Suir put up some resistance and had to be reduced. The only stumbling block now was Waterford City itself. A detachment of Owen Roe's Ulster Irish force had made their way there and linked up with the city's defender – and neither were in a surrendering mood.

(sings, NO SURRENDER by Bruce Springsteen)

(words altered slightly)

*Well, we busted out of there
Had to get away from those fools
We learned more from a 3- day march on foot
Than we ever learned in school
Tonight I hear the neighborhood drummer sound
I can feel my heart begin to pound
You say you're tired and you just want to close your eyes
And follow your dreams down*

*Chorus:
Well, we made a promise we swore we'd always remember
No retreat, Cromwell, no surrender
Like soldiers in the winter's night
With a vow to defend
No retreat, Cromwell, no surrender*

*The walls of this town may come crashing in
There's a war outside still raging
You think it ain't ours anymore to win
But I want to sleep beneath
Peaceful skies in my lover's bed
With a wide open country in my eyes
And these romantic dreams in my head*

*Once we made a promise we swore we'd always remember
No retreat, Cromwell, no surrender
Blood brothers in a stormy night
With a vow to defend
No retreat, Cromwell, no surrender*

As it turned out, Cromwell couldn't get close enough to the city with his big guns anyway. Winter was closing in and everywhere was sodden. He decided on a strategic withdrawal to Cork, where there were plenty of friendly faces, stopping briefly to take Dungarvan and a few more towns on the way. He set up winter quarters outside Youghal and battened down the hatches for some well-earned rest and recreation for himself and his weary men.

Exit minstrel.

Scene six

CROM: *(in spotlight, writing letter to his wife.)*

My dearest wife

Thou art dearer to me than any other creature. I count the days in this wretched country until I shall be home once more. I long for to touch you, and to partake in my favourite sport of hawking around the marshy fields of Ely once again.

But it is God's will that things are as they are, so I must be patient. You know what my manner of life had been before I found Him. I lived and loved darkness and hated the light. I was the chief of sinners. I hated Godliness, yet God had mercy on me. Oh, the riches of his mercy.

Only recently I had occasion to pass the utmost judgment on a soldier in my army. He was a rapist, and no great loss, but it is a burden that weighs heavily on me for now, and makes me wonder how many more of his like we have with us. One bad apple can be removed, but if more lurk at the bottom of the barrel, then I fear we may be no better than the basest of our enemies.

Christmas fast approaches, that unholy festival foisted upon us the Popish Church. You know my feeling on Christmas; I think it is a pagan festival and should be banned...

(he feels unwell and calls for Hastings)

Hastings! Bring me my medicine.

(Hastings arrives with a potion)

Confound it! I feel like a dog with the distemper. Something is wrong

HAST: It is this place, my Lord. It is disease-ridden. Half your army is unwell.

CROM: Half of them are fitter for the hospital than the field that I know.

HAST: It is just as well the enemy do not know it too.

CROM : Oh, they know it – yet they know not what to do. But as for my own self, it is more than just this 'country sickness'. I have felt this way for more than a month now. I should be riding with my men, instead I spend most of my time in my bed.

HAST: Rest is the only cure, my Lord. When the weather improves, you will improve.

CROM: I sometimes think it is the food. I feel that my insides are churning up whenever I eat. Spoiled meat maybe. Or perhaps I am being poisoned?

HAST: I hardly think that is likely. Your meals are specially prepared by the number one chef.

CROM; Well, have him taste them before he brings them to me. If he is killing me I want him to enjoy the experience before I do. I hear there is good news about O'Neill.

HAST: Yes, my Lord. He was buried some weeks since.
CROM: His army is finished then. There is no other to lead them. And without O'Neill to help them Ormonde, Inchiquin and the rabble they command are finished too. It is only a matter of time. We should give thanks to the Lord for the great mercy he has bestowed on us.

They kneel and pray

scene seven

Emir is mourning the death of Owen Roe.

EMIR: Owen Roe is put here...
Who will sing the praises of the Irish now,
who the deeds of men?...
With Owen Roe dead the Irish muses are silent...
From henceforth you shall be known as the true Earl of Tyrone, like your
uncle Hugh O'Neill before you. *(she prays)*
Dear God, let not his body lie in the cold unfriendly earth at
Cloughtogher - for they say it is a barren place -but be carried back home,
victorious ,to Armagh. Let his passing be mourned throughout Ireland.
And if whatever sins he committed have been wiped out by penance, give
him, oh Lord, eternal rest in the true motherland. Amen

Enter Eithne. She looks distressed.

EMIR: Eithne. Where are you going?
EITHNE: What time is it? I must get home because mother is ailing with the fever,
and father will expect a meal prepared when he gets back from the fair.
EMIR: Eithne, you cannot go home. Don't you remember?
EITHNE: What should I remember?
EMIR: Cromwell's soldiers. The massacre....
EITHNE: You can't fool me. Cromwell is dead. *(recites)*
Cromwell is dead, and risen, and dead again.
And risen the third time after he was slain.
No wonder, for he's the messenger of Hell
Now he buffets us; now posts to tell
What's past; and for more game new counsel takes
Of his good friend the Devil, who keeps the stakes.
EMIR: Where did you learn that?
EITHNE: One of the kitchen workers. They say he was killed in battle at Ross.

EMIR: They say it in vain then. Cromwell is as alive as you and me. He is in this very camp.

EITHNE: He is here?

EMIR: Yes.

EITHNE: But he doesn't show himself.

EMIR: He has taken to his bed. They think it is the 'country sickness'.
(she takes some poisonous wild mushrooms from her pocket)
But it is these. He likes his mushroom soup. And I make sure he gets plenty. Soon, I hope he will have enough of them in his stomach to finish him off.

EITHNE: Mushrooms, hah! You cannot poison the Devil! Let Owen Roe come. He will surely finish him when he gets here.

EMIR: Owen Roe is dead, Eithne.

EITHNE: He is not dead. He cannot be. You are lying. He promised...he promised to avenge Drogheda. To avenge my father, my brothers... *(crying)*...he promised...you promised.

EMIR: They will be avenged. That I promise.

EITHNE: The Roundheads will trample Ireland into the ground, now that Owen Roe is gone. I cannot go on. I think I will drown myself soon.

EMIR: Eithne! You must stop this morbid talk. Ireland is not finished. We will see sunny days before too long.

EITHNE: Will we? We are slaves, awaiting transportation; I have been raped by the vilest of creatures; now I feel my body changing and I fear I am with child. What is there left to live for? I tell you, I will not give birth to the spawn of that Puritan devil.

EMIR: Oh Eithne! Are you sure?

EITHNE: No. But I fear the worst.

Scene eight

Sometime later.

CROM: We have news from London. The young Charles has arrived in Scotland, where they have proclaimed him King. And the Royalists are making noises again. He is promised an army of twenty thousand, and thinks to splatter us all over the English countryside. They say my presence is required.

HAST: You will go?

CROM: I must. Eventually. But first I must reduce this Romish outcrop. Charles will not make haste to take us on; the weather is on our side. And he is no doubt a ditherer, like his father. I will go, but we have some months grace

yet. *(he laughs)* I am also to have my portrait painted when I get there. Apparently this campaign has made me very popular in London. That I was as popular here!

HAST: That is excellent news my Lord. And very deserved. You must have it done in all your finery

CROM: Certainly not! When it happens it will be as I am, warts and all. *(pause)* Have you noticed that I am much better in myself these days?

HAST: I have my Lord. Your change of diet has worked wonders.

CROM: Change of cook too! You saw the evidence yourself; rolling around under my dining table, having partook of my food before myself. I was being poisoned, sure enough.

HAST: The cook confessed?

CROM: Oh, he confessed right enough, before we dispatched him. Confessed that he had been collecting wild herbs and vegetables from the surrounding woods – or had sent others foraging – but swore they were not poisonous. Hah! This whole damn place is poisonous; we are infested with collaborators. But what are we to do? We must use them in our everyday business.

That he was aided and abetted there is no doubt...but by whom?

It is a mystery, Hastings, that, I confess, we haven't yet solved to my satisfaction. But...I am at least now in good health again.

Now, what business have we?

HAST: Kilkenny my Lord. Sir Walter Butler requires your answer.

CROM: He has had my answer. Already our big guns are beginning to breach his walls. A liberal dose of shock and awe should bring him to his knees.

HAST: Shock and awe, my Lord? Is this a new tactic of yours?

CROM: I fear I cannot claim the credit for it. It was old when Hannibal crossed the Alps. It has served many masters – and served them well. It served me well at Naseby and other places- and I am sure it will continue to do so now and in the future. I hope by now Sir Walter has got the message. Send him this, however

(he dictates)

Sir, I cannot agree to your demands, which in any case you are in no position to make. For that which you mention concerning liberty of conscience, I meddle not with any man's conscience. But if by liberty of conscience you mean liberty to exercise the Mass, I judge it best to use plain language, and let you know that where the Parliament of England have power, you will not be allowed to. However, if you like to march away with those under your command, with their arms, bag and baggage, and deliver up the town, then the inhabitants shall be permitted to live

peaceably, free from injury and violence from the soldiers. By this you will see my intention to save blood and to preserve Kilkenny from ruin. I rest your servant, Oliver Cromwell.

Light change. Enter the minstrel.

MINST: *(sings)*

*And in Kilkenny it is reported
Cromwellian soldiers lay still as rock.
Two hundred felled in the blood-stained alleys
No more the Irish faith to mock*

He exits. Enter Cromwell and Hastings

CROM: Confound it Hastings. I have lost more soldiers in Kilkenny than anywhere else in the campaign so far. With a combined force of more than four thousand, we outnumbered the defenders by four to one. Yet when we attacked, we were repelled time and again. How is that? Perhaps God was displeased with us.

HAST: God gave you a great victory. The town has surrendered.

CROM: Yes. After a week of heavy fighting. How many did we lose?

HAST: Several hundred, My Lord.

CROM: We must pray for steadfastness, Hastings. Perhaps my soldiers are becoming complacent. Have them assemble immediately for thanksgiving to the Lord. And make sure that preacher is in attendance.

Both exit

MINST: Cromwell now turned his attention to Clonmel the last objective of his spring campaign, and which had just seen the arrival of one thousand five hundred Ulster troops led by Hugh Dubh O'Neill, a nephew of Owen Roe.

He exits

Scene nine. Enter EMIR and EITHNE

EMIR: Eithne! Eithne! Have you heard? Hugh Dubh is here in Clonmel. Everybody is saying it is true. It is as if Owen Roe had come back to life. *(Eithne, slumped in the corner, does not respond.)*
Eithne! It's good news.

EITHNE: Leave me be. There is no good news anymore. For me or anyone.
EMIR: But don't you see. We will be saved now. We must escape and go to Hugh Dubh. The Roundheads will be beaten now...and our Lord Cromwell put to the sword. Come let us prepare; we must cross the Suir tonight when the camp is asleep. The town walls are less than a mile away on the other bank.
EITHNE: And how do we get there? I cannot swim. Nor can you.
EMIR: It is all fixed. We are to be met by somebody with a boat by that grove of trees yonder. *(she points in the direction of the trees)*. It is not far, no more than fifteen minutes walk. We must go there just before first light. It is okay; I have arranged it all.
EITHNE: I cannot go.
EMIR: But you must. I have heard that a boat leaves Wexford next week for the Barbados, and that all of us at this camp will be on it.
EITHNE: I would rather that than face the disgrace of my own people seeing me like this.
EMIR: But your...condition, it is not certain yet.
EITHNE: It is certain. And in a few more weeks it will be obvious.
EMIR: You cannot stay here. If you are put on that ship you will die on it. Many never make it to the journey's end. Even if you do make it the strain would probably mean you would lose the child.
EITHNE: I would welcome it with open arms. Rather than have a bastard by a Puritan Devil. Oh, Lord, what am I to do.
EMIR: There are charitable people who will help you. I will seek them out. But we must go from here.
EITHNE: *(pause)* Very well, I will come with you tonight. I have no wish to die on foreign shores.

Lights change to signify passing to time. Scene is now by the riverbank, just before dawn. Eithne and Emir wear two shawls keep out the worst of the weather.

EITHNE: Where is he? Soon the soldiers will be awake.
EMIR: Shhh...I hear something.

A man appears from the grove, his face hidden by a scarf wrapped round it.

MAN: It is almost time. Who is your contact in the house?
EMIR: His name?...*(she hesitates)* Why do you wish to know?
MAN: You are leaving. We need to know your replacement. *(pause)*
Come on! Quickly! We cannot stay here any longer.

EMIR: Very well, it is...the cobbler. Where is the boat? I cannot see....

MAN : There is no boat. Only me...

(He unravels the scarf from his face, to reveal himself as Hastings.)

You two, over here!

(Two soldiers appear at his command).

You heard. The cobbler....

(He points at one).

You...go and seize him.

(to the other one)

And you... take this pair under escort.

During this exchange Eithne has been edging away. Suddenly she breaks and runs, and throws herself into the River. During this scene THE RIVER, by BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN should be playing in the background

*I come from down in the valley
where mister when you're young
They bring you up to do like your daddy done
Me and Mary we met in high school
when she was just seventeen
We'd ride out of that valley down to where the fields were green*

*We'd go down to the river
And into the river we'd dive
Oh down to the river we'd ride*

*Then I got Mary pregnant
and man that was all she wrote
And for my nineteenth birthday I got a union card and a wedding
coat
We went down to the courthouse
and the judge put it all to rest
No wedding day smiles no walk down the aisle
No flowers no wedding dress*

*That night we went down to the river
And into the river we'd dive
Oh down to the river we did ride*

EMIR: Eithne! No! Oh no...
(she turns to Hastings)
Please do something. Don't let her drown.

HAST: There is nothing I can do. The river is very fast flowing. She will be a hundred yards away in a few moments. Besides it is still dark. Nobody could find her now.

EMIR: You bastards. You dirty rotten bastards...

The soldier leads her away. End of scene

Scene ten

Cromwell, Hastings, Emir, soldiers etc.

CROM: You are a spy. Tell me why I shouldn't hang you.

EMIR: I am no spy.

CROM: You have been gathering information to pass on to my enemies.

EMIR: I am not a spy. I am a prisoner. I owe you no allegiance.

HAST: You tried to poison my Lord.

EMIR: That I had only succeeded. All Ireland would rejoice.

CROM: I told you Hastings. This one has mettle. A thousand like her and we would lose this war.

EMIR: You will lose it anyway. You can never win. A hundred, five hundred years we shall still be fighting you. As you will find out when you engage with Hugh Dubh.

HAST: Another O'Neill, my Lord.

CROM: This septic island is brimming with them, it appears.

EMIR: And O'Donnells, and O'Briens, and...

CROM: Enough! I shall cut them all down to size. Then I shall return to England and cut the Scottish pretender down to size.

EMIR: You wage war on women and children.

HAST: My Lord does not wage war on innocent civilians.

EMIR: You killed Eithne.

HAST: Her friend my Lord. She drowned herself.

EMIR: You may as well have killed her. She was raped by one of your soldiers.

CROM: And he paid the ultimate price. Now enough of your blather.
What are we to do with her, Hastings?

EMIR: I wish to be hanged. I confess that I am a spy.

Hastings whispers in Cromwell's ear.

CROM: And have you die a martyr's death? I think not. Your punishment is deportment from this island to the West Indies, where you will remain for a minimum of ten years.

HAST: A ship leaves Wexford in two days my Lord.

CROM: Very well, take her away.

EMIR: A thousand curses be upon you all. *(to Cromwell)* I will live to see your carcass dragged through the streets of London. This I promise

A soldier leads her away.

EMIR: *(sings NO SURRENDER)*
Well, we made a promise we swore we'd always remember
No retreat, Cromwell, no surrender
Like soldiers in the winter's night
With a vow to defend
No retreat, Cromwell, no surrender

MINST: Clonmel was Cromwell's last military engagement in Ireland. However, reducing Clonmel wasn't as easy as he had thought. With an army of 9000 at his disposal he surrounded the town, and battered it with his big guns for nine days before attacking. The slow progress however had enabled Hugh Dubh to lay a trap for him. He constructed a channel inside the wall, designed to herd the attackers into a long cul'de-sac, where they could be shot at from a five foot high barricade of rubble. They breached the walls and poured into this channel, where they encountered little resistance at first, before being exposed to murderous artillery and musket fire from the hidden defenders. It was a blood bath, and at the end of that day about 2000 of Cromwell's invincibles lay dead on the streets of Clonmel.

During the Minstrels speech we hear the sound of battle, gunfire, the beat of the bodhran ect. We see several Roundheads felled in battle, and being dragged away.

MINST: Despite the appalling casualties Cromwell was determined to press on the next day. However, O'Neill troops, exhausted and almost out of ammunition decided to abandon the town under cover of darkness. They escaped over the bridge across the Suir and fled to Waterford. Next morning the Mayor of the town negotiated favourable surrender terms.

When Cromwell entered the town and found he had been tricked he was in a rage.

CROM: By God above I will follow that Hugh Duff O'Neill where-so-ever he goes

MINST: He did. And by Carrick on Suir he had caught up with stragglers and made them pay with their lives.

That marked the end of Cromwell's military campaign in Ireland. Within weeks he was back in England, taking up where he had left off.

He stayed a mere nine months in Ireland, but he left behind a country devastated by, war, plague and famine. A person might travel thirty miles and not see a living creature, either man, beast or bird, they either all being dead or quit the desolate terrain. You would hear stories of places where smoke was seen, it being so rare to see smoke by day or candlelight by night. And when you did see people, it was but aged men and women and children.

And they had become as bottles in the smoke, skin black as an oven. Oliver Cromwell left Ireland in May 1650, but the war raged on for several more years, the resistance growing weaker and smaller with the passing of time.

New scene

We now see Cromwell's departure from Ireland.

HAST: You no longer wish to avail of my services, my Lord?

CROM: An English battlefield is no place for you, Hastings. Your expertise lies in more...specialist areas. Anyway, Ireland suits your...constitution better.

HAST: I detest the place my Lord. I long for England's green and pleasant land.

CROM: Well, you will have to temper you enthusiasm for England for a few more years...

HAST: A few more years, my Lord!

CROM: I fear it may take that long to pacify the rest of this lawless province. I am sure you will be happy here; there will be after all plenty of opportunities to consolidate up your relationships with Barbados. Plenty more girls and boys to procure for his Excellency. And if you should hold back one or two of the prettier ones...

HAST: My Lord?

CROM: Come now Hastings, I think we both know what I mean. (*pause*) Though I think you may find my successor will not be so easy-going... (*pause*) Now, I need to say a few parting words.

CROM: It may be thought that some praise is due to my gallant men of whose valor so much mention is made. It's their joy that they are instruments of God's glory, and their country's good. It's their honour that God vouchsafes to use them, and they that have been employed in this service know that faith and prayer obtained this country for us. I do not say ours only but the people of God all England over. God has put the sword in Parliament's hands, and only God can take it away.

End of scene

MINST: The pacification was judged to have been completed by the end of 1653, and a law was passed in the English Parliament

CROM: Under penalty of death, no Irish man, woman, or child, is to let himself, herself, or itself, be found east of the River Shannon after 1st May 1654

MINST: 'TO HELL OR TO CONNAUGHT' had finally come to pass.

(sings)

Where have all the young men gone

Long time passing

Where have all the young men gone

Long time ago

Where have all the young men gone

Gone to exile every one.

When will they return

When will they ever return

All the cast appear on stage and join in the singing.

End

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Note

The songs suggested in the script are not set in stone. Producers can feel free to use their own choice of songs.

Suggested songs:

NO SURRENDER

THE RIVER

WITH GOD ON OUR SIDE

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE

(permission to use these songs may be required)

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Tom O'Brien is a native of Kilmacthomas Co Waterford and is a full time writer, playwright and poet.

Performed plays include **Money from America, Cricklewood Cowboys, On Raglan Road, Johnjo, Gorgeous Gaels, Brendan Behan's Women Down Bottle Alley, No Blacks, No Dogs, No Poles**, etc

Books include **Letters To Mother and Other Dead Relatives, Cricklewood Cowboys, The Shiny Red Honda, The Missing Postman and Other Stories**, etc

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Tom has lived in Hastings UK since 2000