



CAHAL O'BYRNE....THE PATRON SAINT OF BELFAST.

The dapper wee man walked along Cavendish street from his home, doffing his hat and smiling to all and sundry. This regal little man was Cahal O'Byrne and as usual he was setting off on another of his missions to explore the old City of Belfast, its myths, characters and traditions. People crossed the street to offer a "Hello" and to experience the warm returned greeting of this much loved man, a cheery start to anyones day.

Cahal was a writer..so was Joe Bloggs..but Cahal was different, very different, he recorded the history of the people and aspects of this City that "historians" ignored and perhaps scoffed at

The books that "Joe Bloggs" writes will lie on dusty shelves in fine buildings far removed from the 'real' people of Belfast and read only by those who have an egotistical sense of their own self importance and no real respect of the true heroes and heroines of this wee city..the common everyday working class man and woman that meant so much to Cahal o'Byrne and inspired him to record so many events that encompassed their lives,times and traditions and most importantly THEIR sense of values

Cahal O'Byrne was no 'mere' formal historian for with his natural love and interest in people he rejoiced in telling a good story and had a talent of recreating events and times of his own life time and before in the most interesting manner. In 1946,at "THE SIGN OF THE THREE CANDLES",Cahal left to Belfast and its people who he loved so well his legacy..."AS I ROVED OUT",a compilation of his many writings that had first appeared in the "IRISH NEWS" in article form.From that day this book hasn't been readily available to the general public,each time it was reprinted it was snapped up and many years passed before its next reprinting,at this moment"BLACKSTAFF PRESS" have reprinted "AS I ROVED OUT" and is now available in all Bookshops and I would urge all "Rushlight" readers to grab a copy while the going is good.priced 12.99,it's the best few bob you could spend,If I was king of Ireland I would order every home in Belfast to have a copy to read,that's how much I enjoy this book,that i have read and reread through the years. Cahal O'Byrne,by the way was involved in the "WHITE CROSS" fund,money that was collected in America in the wake of the terrible sectarian troubles in Belfast in the 1920's-30's,this fund was used to build Amcomria for people to be housed having had to flee their homes in flashpoint areas of the city,the street got its name from this American Relief in Ireland Fund.

In the first edition of "ASI ROVED OUT",a note from Cahal dedicates the book to"MY LIFELONG FRIEND,FRANCIS JOSEPH BIGGER OF ARD RIGH", Bigger was also a historian and lover of old Belfast, "ARD RIGH",was his Antrim Road house that was sadly demolished just a few years ago.When the old grave