

# **RULES OF**

**A film by Oliver Herbrich**

# **THE ROAD**

**List of text  
and narration  
English version**

**Fiction – Non-Fiction  
Film Edition**

Johnny Collins Voice only (opening sequence)

(off) When you leave Ireland your body leaves Ireland. Your heart always stays behind. You always long to come home - even so it's only the side of a road. It's your homeland ...

Title: LONDON at the end of the 20th century.

Interview with Gizzy, scrapyard manager, London, interior

Mr Gizzy

Basically it's a piece of lead which has rerun from cable. Which the tinkers go round the road - the roadside people - pull it out they sometimes manage to buy it and what they do is melt it down - get the lead back out - the copper wire back out and sell the two articles separate. Obviously now this is a thing of the past. It can't be done anymore, because of the waste trade is a licensed trade now, the controlled waste - this is illegal. No more can cable (off) or burning wire be burned on an old tip in the air because of the ozone whatever. If they're caught doing it now they are fined astronomical - 1000 - 2000 pounds. (42")

Interview with Sam Power, Ferrylane Site, London exterior

Sam Power

(off) A days labour would cut out: twenty pound.

It's slow - but time is our own ... we have plenty of time to do it.

(on) Now I've cut the cable and I'm going to pull out the copper wire out of it. - What's in it.

So, that's the lead.

Interview Gizzy 2, scrapyard-manager, London interior

(off) They have a go at anything - some legal, some illegal. But they have to get a living like everyone else so it's basically all there is too it. (8")

(on) And there was a little story of a place not far from here, a road where one or two lorries were parked and the police knew about it and one night they set a raid and went round there. When they came back - I don't know - two or three police cars, they chased them - not tinkers - well Irish tipper-drivers and they chased them across some wasteland but what they didn't realise they didn't leave anyone in charge of the motors. (off) So when they came back they'd gone round the other way and completely wrecked their cars. (30")

Int Sam Power part 2, Ferry Lane site, London, exterior

Sam Power

When did I come to this country from Ireland? - It's be (off) '57. You just pulled where you want. Today you won't pull where you want. Travelling is finished.

(on:) I'd reckon another three months, two to three, and I think I'll be going home. Me days is finished here. A lot of old travelling people is trying to get home now - because if you die in this country it's too much - the cost of living is too expensive to bring a person home.

Ireland is home, there's no home over here. There's no home over here. (58")

Narration 1

London, A 40 West. The departure point of our film journey - a quest after the ways of modern nomadic lifestyle. A contemporary road movie foregoing the familiar cliché of romantic escape. Instead we focus on those who not only herald a sweeping economic migration, but are also the living exponents of an odyssey. An odyssey reflecting the state of mind of an absolute industrial society.

(Title:) Ireland

Narration 2

Travellers have wandered the Irish countryside for centuries. They were tinsmiths, harvesters and migrant labourers, fortune and story tellers, horse traders and peddlers, knife-grinders and scrap dealers - always performing a welcome chore for the settled population. As the centuries went by the Tinkers - like nomads of other countries - adjusted their life-styles to the changing conditions. But with the present generation the traditional life on the road comes to an end.

Narration 3

The precise origin of the Travellers is a matter of speculation. The crop failures of the 19th century are repeatedly blamed for pushing large numbers of farmers from their small parcels of land. Today in Ireland the famine of 1845 to 1848 is widely regarded as having sired the Tinker clans. The famines, however, decimated the entire island - one million died of starvation and at least as many fled Ireland's misery by emigration. Although thousands were forced from their homes, only a few remained true to the road. And it was these wanderers who gradually evolved their identity as Travellers. The road became their home.

## Interview with Mrs Nelly McInerney with barreltop caravan

Well I come from Meena meself, County Tipperary. My own families name is Tooheys from Meena. All belonging to my family lived in Meena. They had a coal store there at one stage. An uncle of my fathers.

So he took to the road - father took to the road and never went back. He's still travelling around. So that's the way I was brought up travelling. (29")

### Part 2

(off) We're all having our tea when this lad came out. He spattered a whole load of water in top and he ruined all the food for us. We went raging. So he went for the guard, he brought the guards and the guard told us we had to leave. So we left that and we came into another place and the council comes out again and say we have to move out there. We moved out of there and we moved to another place and on they come again. (20")

(on) So I got really vexed with them then for all the moving we were after doing. I really tore into them and I said - you go have a good fuck off with yourself - If you were all of the council men in Ireland - I'm not leaving here! Before you go any further - I've just had my belly-full of you and I'm going to take no more of it. I'll leave the one way if you find me a place to stay. I'll go this minute. So he went away and I never heard tell of him no more. (Laughs). (30")

### Narration 4

*Every ninth Traveller child never sees the first birthday. Yet today, one-third of Traveller children die before the age of fifteen. At the same time, only five percent of the adults are older than fifty. Poverty is unanimously acknowledged as cause for this low life expectancy. Neither nature nor civilisation cares whether a human creature is treated justly. The Travellers know this - their experience is witness.*

Chrissy Ward Voice only on stockmaterial (Title: 1965)

(off) There's a lot of them gone very young and I thought if they had more human rights would they live longer? And because the people didn't care for them, they didn't care for themselves, so life was short. - So this is a poem about all of our souls. When people ask me: "Where were you born?"



Title

Where were you born  
On History

Narration on stills b&w (Title: 1930)

WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

Where were you born?  
It doesn't matter I'm sure  
Born to a mother  
On the side of a road  
She gave birth to a baby  
In winter wind  
In a camp back road  
They moved her wagon  
with nowhere to go  
packing her extra bundle  
Just a day old  
Walking the road  
In winter rain  
In her body so much pain  
Ireland never worried  
Only the Lord  
Another little bundle  
With sadness in the heart  
Where were you born?  
It doesn't matter I'm sure  
When you are a traveller  
On the side of the road  
The trouble you get  
When you belong to a clan  
A traveller-tinker  
With stars in the heart  
Moving around with a jolly sound  
Blocking the pain away  
From your heart

Interview with Mr and Mrs McDonagh (Tinsmith and woman) exterior

Mr McDonagh

The time I'm talking about, you'd be stuck there by the side of a little ditch with a tent and there could be that height of snow. Now when the guards would come out - maybe around 12 or 1 o'clock - drag the tent from over you - pack it out there through the snow - you'd be lying there on a wad of straw - and you had to get up. Now you would best and leave that place. You'd keep going through the snow until you come onto some place - that you'd have to clear away the snow and try and put up that tent again. Now you'd have no firewood, because you wouldn't see the sticks because of the snow, and you mightn't be there three hours till you were beat out of that. (45")

Mrs Mc Donagh

We were all living within houses - down in Connaught - down below Athlone and they were all beat, all beat and run like sheep - beyond up across the bridge and then (off) they could go where they liked then after. They took to the road in ... (20")

Mr McDonagh

They took to the road and (on) they never left it. They never left it. Starting from that they'd build little bits of tents the best way they could. Maybe if there was an old shed in the fields they might go in there for a night. (off) Our life at that time you'd be as well dead as alive - because we suffered too much. Because when I was up to eight up to nine year old. I often had to tie bags round me feet to keep them out of the frost and snow.

Question Could you tell us about your family, how many children you had?

Mrs McDonagh

Fifteen - tell them fifteen.

Mr McDonagh

We have sixteen, yeah sixteen.

Mrs Mc Donagh

Fifteen!

Mr Mc Donagh

Fifteen? - Fifteen! - We have nine living out of fifteen. Five boys and four girls.

Interview with Johnny Collins, Tinsmith making a bucket, exterior

Well, I learned the trade from my father and he learned it from his father before him - going back hundreds of years. They picked it up off each other. Father from father to son.

You see back years ago when the travellers were around, we used to pull into what we call a camp and we'd stay there for two or three weeks - as long as we had to stay there - so we'd do all the work in the area. Then we'd move maybe twenty or thirty miles and we'd do the same. So maybe in a year's time we'd be back in the same camp. We used to keep in a circle all the time. We'd probably end up in the same camp as we started in - but we'd always got work. Until the plastic came in and killed the trade off altogether - nobody was buying off us so we were wasting our time making the cans or buckets.

### Narration 5

*The far-reaching economic changes have forced the traditional Travellers from the road to settle at the peripheries of cities. And so our journey takes us to the westcoast of Ireland from the countryside to the cities.*

### Interview with Frank Toohey in his caravan at roadside

Frank Toohey

When the harvest was increasing we were getting more food, we were beginning to get our own money and life was beginning to come on for us. We were able to buy our own food (11")

and we heard of a thing called the social welfare. And it was 6 pounds a week. So my father went in and he signed up for it and he was getting six pounds a week. (13")

(off) Things began to buck up for us. So my mother and father died. A great part of my brothers. And I got married and I have ten in the family now, nine girls and one boy and we collect scrap and we get the dole. So we told them that we only can see life as all we get to feed eleven is one hundred pounds - just the bare survival. So it's because of the collection of the bit of scrap that it helps out with the amount of dole. And there's no such thing as any hardship, really poverty and real hunger. We escaped that from the bit of scrap. (21")

### Narration 6

*Galway, located opposite the Aran Islands, is the westernmost point of our journey. Today only a few Travellers still travel - the majority cannot afford to move. Even though the Travellers represent a minority, their numbers are astonishingly high. Today some 25,000 Irish Travellers live in caravans. Another 80,000 live in England.*



## Title

Nobody likes us  
Family clan

## NOBODY LIKES US

Nobody likes us  
 We have different ways  
 Nobody likes us  
 I wonder do we care?  
 We don't really need them  
 We've plenty of freinds of our own  
 We stick together  
 Through thick and thin  
 We're not lost  
 We have our own people  
 Till the day we die  
 We don't have no rights  
 You know that's true  
 In this life what can we do?  
 Because nobody likes us  
 Why should we lie down and die?  
 We have our family to share all our lives.

## Narration 7

The family is the basic economic and social unit - comparable to the Romany or Sinti. To assure marriages within the clan, the wedding matches until recently were made by parents when the daughters were fourteen, fifteen or sixteen years old. Catholic in faith, they themselves gave birth to an average of 12 children.

Occasionally brides never met their husbands until their wedding days. There was only one way to upset the parental wedding plans: the adolescent girl would run off with her boyfriend and the two would remain in hiding until the following morning. The romantic marriage was then assured, for the moment a young woman's virginity was placed in question, she had no choice but to marry. This Run-away-match was used by Kitty Delaney - sixty-five years ago at the age of sixteen.

Interview with Kitty Delaney, old traveller in carvan, Hillside

Mrs Delaney

Because I think when the match is made neither the girl nor the boy will be satisfied - they go by the parents but a lot of them shouldn't. I think its up to the girl - its up to yourselves - because both sides have to be very satisfied because you're getting married for life aren't you. It not like something for minutes. (24")



(off) We struggled through life. We came on to have a big family. 19, four dead and 15 alive. 9 boys and 6 girls. Any time I ever had a child it was the very same as if I never had one. You'd just have your baby - you'd come out - you'd wash and clean and look after the rest of them. You weren't thinking about yourself at all - you were thinking about the family at that time.

(on) It's no joke if you have to rear a big family there and go out and day in and day out caring for them. It's not like you have a steady job and a good home - it's very easy to rear a family. But you have to try and keep them clean - try and keep them going to school - you have to keep them fed number one, and you have to keep them in their own place number two. Keep them out of trouble and bother - thanks be to god we never got none of it anyway. We had a good old life. (30")

Interview "women-club" inside of caravn

Molly

So there was no family planning, that's why the women had the bigger families. So we used to go by the routine of our mothers -

that you had to have big families, that if you did anything against it like we'll say, abortions which you hear now and things like that. That that is a sin, and I count that still as a very big sin in my own way.

And we didn't know anything. How to manage to keep ourself from having big families. But the younger women do know.

Nancy

The changes for the women - the women at that time had very large families and they had children nearly every year. Some of them. Some of them had maybe 15 children, maybe 20. And maybe - the lowest family might be 10. But the woman today has very much lower families than that. The highest family in my generation maybe six or seven will be a very large family. (28")

Geraldine

The younger girl - I wouldn't have a large family myself. I'd like two or three probably, whereas I came from a family of ten. That wouldn't be me now I'd say. (13")

Nancy

The women today have an easier life than the women years ago because the dole came in and the women could live on that. Whereas the women years ago had to go out and beg for what they had (11")

Molly

When I got married in 1953, it was hard times but I thought I was going into luxury because my husband had a green cover over the tent and I thought that was very good to have. But still I had to beg the day that I got married. (17")

Geraldine

Somepeople know how to beg these days but I wouldn't know how to do it so I wouldn't do it. So, it's all changing all the time. And I would say it's changing for the better will say. (11")

Narration 8

*The women's growing independence has long undermined the man's authority as the family head. The women are gaining power. Usually they are the ones who represent the family to the outside world and deal for instance with charity or welfare organisations. The men can claim only one domain as exclusively their own: when it comes to confrontations with the police.*

*In the past the men were responsible for horse and cart - essentials of the nomadic life-style. Automobiles don't require such constant care. The traditional skills have become obsolete, and so the fathers have no trades to teach their sons. Family structure and destination are gone. The Travellers today aperaturely lost their nucleus.*

Title: Ballinasloe

Interview with Mrs Winifred Harty at roadside camp before departure

(off) I have four kids and the last place we were in was a place called Shannon, (on) County Clare. I booked them in a school there but the Gardai came on and moved us off. So we're here a week now since this Friday coming and with our kids booked into a school over there, we're still moved off here - because (14")

If we don't go they might get a JCB and pull us off altogether and leave our caravans on the road, and everything inside the caravan would be broken. Everything like that. They don't really care. So just for peace we'd move away from them. (12")

I was reared in a house - its very hard to cope on the side of the road because I was born and reared in a house. I have four kids now which I would love to be reared back in a house. But it's so hard to get a house there and this is why we're on the road. (13" off) Because the council's so hard to give us houses. And there's only a few halting sites for so many families, and there are so many families picked for them. And we're not lucky yet. We maybe someday lucky for a site. All we really need is just site (on) for the water and toilets and to keep the kids clean. (16")

## Narration 9

Headed for Dublin we travel the island from west to east - leaving southern Ireland all behind.

Title:

Mick  
Identity

Nur Ton

MICK

Mick, you're always dirty  
We never see your face  
You're feet they're always smelly  
People think it's from this place  
What am I going to do with you  
No matter how hard I try  
I never really change you  
You're just like a dirty-faced child

If you were tidy - your happiness would be gone  
When you are dirty you have the soul of a happy man  
When you pick the children  
you surely ruin their clothes  
the little children love it  
but Mammies cock their nose

Mick you're so happy  
And contented in the mind  
No matter what people say about you  
You turn around and smile  
If you had a white shirt  
and a matching shirt and tie  
The children wouldn't know you  
They'd walk the other side

It would be sad to change you  
It could do a lot of harm  
That's the way God made you  
With your easy going mind.



Title: Dublin District

Interview with "Cider" John McDonagh guiding us through his realm

(off) You get a man looking for an old tyre, (on) an old spare wheel - everybody gets punctured sometime. You know what I mean. (off) If they come in here to me they can buy a second hand tyre and the whole lot and shooting gallery for 4 or 5 pound. (on) Secondly, I have this caravan here for myself and the wife and kids (19")

- all you see around there is, oh eh old scrap batteries over here. I'll show you. Come over here and I'll show you. I've a sore leg at this moment now - it's not too long since I had a fall. Now what I do with those batteries is this way - watch - (15")

I drain them like that. Now I drain them in a way. Now. We'll surmise now for a minute that will do. Now when that's full I take it from here and I spill it out in the road. Now what I do with those yokes here? (29")

You have one of them - you may need a window - you may need a bumper or a horn. I can supply that. If you go to the garage they're going to charge you full fee. If you come to me it's a quarter of the amount. Now I have my own water up there. My own water. I have my own toilets. I have my own transport. And then again - come up here and I'll show you. Now. Come up here and I'll show you that. (32")

It's like taking a bird off a tree and putting him in a cage. What do you do with him? You put him in jail. Well to put me in a house you do that. There is my life and there is my living. There I will live and there I'll die. That's my story and that's it. Now I hope you accept that. (25")

Interview with Mr and Mrs "Cider" John McDonagh inside their caravn

Mr McDonagh

Well, I'm not a rich man. I wouldn't call - well I'm not poor in a way. I had money at one stage. (off) But I was panicking at the time because the money I had - I couldn't account where it came from. I gambled a lot of money on horses and I burned some of it in the fire through panic. I threw it into the fire and I got away from the problem I had at the time. But money is not everything. (on) See your faith is a good thing to have, if you believe in the almighty god, who else do you have to believe to? (33")



Mrs McDonagh

(off) Our lady of Knock that's what I believe in. And that's why my child got cured. He was completely deaf in one ear. (8")

(on) But when I found out he was deaf, I took him to Knock, on the pilgramage, and I done three years. Brought him back for three years, to Knock. And thank to our lady of Knock he got cured without doctors. (14")

Mr McDonagh

Look at this. After a year and a half look at the bone still coming through the side - would you call that a success? Doctors? How do? That's where my faith lies, in our lady there. I have more respect for that piece of paper than I have for all the doctorshipment that's gone into that. (17")

Mrs Mc Donnagh

(off) For any sickness I think a person should believe in our lady (on) because she has the power and if you have the faith, she has the cure. (10")

Mr McDonnagh

If you hadn't that little bit of faith it's no good. It's like praying to him up there and having no meanings in it. (off) Faith is a great thing to have and if you haven't belief you have nothing. (5")

Narration 10

Since the sixties the Travellers have migrated to the cities to work a new niche: they live from other peoples rubbish. This destroys the culture and identity of the industrial age's last surviving nomads. Since then the government attempts to force the Travellers to take up sedentary life-styles. The thriving welfare state simply defined them as a problem, as outcasts requiring assimilation.

Title: Dublin

The survival artists of the past were far less affluent than the Travellers today. But the price is high: Mobility and self-reliance are forgotten virtues. Cut off from their roots they remain strangers in their own country. New forms of dependence are created. One-fourth of the Travellers live in housing schemes like these - or at least attempt to. Many rooms stand empty because entire families prefer to live in one room - the traditional way. Such problems of adjustment to the new environment lead to further discrimination.

Interview with Mrs Chrissy Ward Interview exterior by houses

When they built those houses they don't consult the travellers they don't ask them what do they want, or what would they like. They put what they think that they like for the travellers and no questions asked. And when they do do it they put a lot of high walls (off) around the travellers. And you'r put away so that you feel you're locked up and kept away from another world and you're in another planet.

(on) It was very very hard for travellers to get used to a closed in space. It was very very hard for ourselves and I'd never stay in my own house except for my children going to school. If I live long enough to see the children be educated I'll be out of it. I'm in it, I clean it, I look after it. I put everything in there, but my heart is not in it. It'll never be in it and I'll never call it my home. (22")

(off) Because life isn't worth living if you're not born free. But those settled community couldn't understand us - because we have different hopes - we have a different way of living. (on) Even although we're living in houses, we're living in a dream. It sounds crazy but we're not in them - if you know what I mean. We're just living in the past and we're living in a dream and we're hoping for the day that we can be free and take off.

Title ROAD TO NOWHERE

Interview with "Paddy". City Dump Dunsink Lane, Dublin

(off) Well if there's a strike in the bin lorries that collect peoples rubbish - outside their houses you know - it gathers and gathers - it stacks there. And then when the strikes over settled community can see how much rubbish that they're producing. They don't realise that until that happens.

(on) For the settled people who throw it out - that's their rubbish. They just dump it because it's no good to them. But it's good to us - the scrap like. Not the rubbish - the scrap out of the rubbish. The likes of aluminium or copper. That's money for us.

It's getting receycled for the refinery. But it's other people's rubbish that we have and we just sell it to the scrapyard. (44")

## Narration 11

Traveller children formerly learned from their parents the rules of survival. As the inherited strategies are no longer viable, new types of vocational training are required. Here the natural gifts of Travellers as artisans is encouraged. But in Ireland, a country experiencing permanently high unemployment numbers, the Travellers are the last hired and the first fired.

The Tinkers had developed a language of their own called "Gammon" or "Cant". Like the Latin of physicians or the English of barristers, the main purpose of this secret language is to safeguard meaning from outsiders. The "Tinkers Talk" evidences their Irish roots, for it is derived from a Celtic antecedent long native to the island. Today only some one-hundred and fifty words of cant remain in circulation - enough, however, to make every English sentence inscrutable.

## Davey Collins interior (classroom) teaching

Well, we'll say good morning everybody. Now you know why we're here. Because our language was dying out and I come here for to learn you back the language again.

Because our culture is dying out if we let it die out and if we keep the words going, well, the children will know in time what it was about anyway. (10")

(off) You'd use it to keep the law or other people out of your business. And if they they asked you what did you say? You'd switch a different word on the spot. You'd say: "Don't bless the bloke!" - "Don't tell the man!". But if he said: "What did you say?" You'd say: "It's a fine day Sir, isn't it". He couldn't know what you said. (17")

## Interview with Davey Collins part 2 exterior at Dunsink, Dublin

The children you tried to learn a language to out-do these people you know - it was called the "Cant".

But they would learn from looking at you anyway. Most of them picked it up. From 10,12,14 years of age they'd be looking at what you done and you wouldn't have to learn them much. They'd learn themselves. But then they dropped out of that and they started going to school, they changed.

In them days none of them could read or write. More than three-quarters of them today can read and write. They know what it is to live a different kind of way.

If they're selling something they don't know how to sell it. They just got to sell it straight-forward but they wouldn't know how to get twice the price for it. I have to laugh at it - wouldn't you?

(off) I would rather be a traveller the whole time than anything else. I think it's better crack this life. (8")



Title

Bad Things in my Mind  
Eviction

BAD THINGS IN MY MIND

*The shiny buttons  
The long black coat  
The tall hat  
With the fancy crown  
The heavy baton  
The cowboy gun  
Belong to those police  
Who always came around  
Our hearts were scared  
When they came near  
They kicked our fire  
And called us names  
And moved us off at the crack of dawn  
We had no breakfast  
Because of those shiny buttons  
We couldn't stay  
Sent us hungry every day  
Kicked our tent flat on the ground  
Rain from heaven  
Would spill down  
Wet our blankets while police laughed and jeered  
Our poor children standing in the rain  
Those bad things in my mind  
Will stay till the day I die.*

Interview with Mrs Chrissy Joyce. Avilla Park Dublin, int.

The eviction was a few council men, an awful lot of Gardai. My sister in law was seven and a half months pregnant with her first baby. She asked the policeman what was going on he told her that an eviction was taking place. So she wasn't long married, she had a lot of valuable stuff inside her caravan - she asked them to give her time to move her Delft and stuff - and they said they wouldn't. So she sat on the tow-bar of her caravan thinking that would prevent them moving out the caravan. One policeman walked over to her and he says (31")

if you want to have what you're having - that baby - I advise you to get up from where you're sitting because if not I'll lift you with a kick and it'll be on the ground in minutes. So my sister in law broke into tears you know. (10")



But my father said, shouted - you can't treat us this way and you shouldn't treat us this way and you haven't got the right. So one of the police man drew out and hit my father so my sister in law then got very angry and she pulled the policeman and she said - don't hit him he's an old man and keep your hands off and there's no need to treat us this way. (off) So with that the policeman grabbed a hold of her blouse and stripped her. (21") ( off) We didn't have a solicitor to support us. We didn't have no legal means. My caravan couldn't be replaced. It had to be scraped. It was of no use to me any more, it had to be scrapped. (16")

#### Interview with the McDonaghs - the poor roadside family

(off) It's just impossible. All our camping places where we used to stay they have them all blocked up. So it's more there fault than it is of ours. If they didn't block the places then we wouldn't have to move. (15")

(on) I parked down the road here as you know yourselves - I was one night there and they moved me out of it. You were there when I had to move. It was late. At least it was dark and there were no lights in the caravan. Moved in here ( 13" off) and we're expecting to get another night in here. Now I'm waiting on a fella coming here. He could land at any minute and just tell me to move off again. If I don't move I'll be brought to court in Nace. (12")

#### Part 2 exterior Mr McDonagh

I said I wasn't moving. They said they'd take me to court in Nace. I told them I didn't mind - I'd go to court. I'm not going for them anyway - that's the whole lot of it. (Dissolve)

#### Narration 12

*A mound of rags is all that greets us when we came to visit the family the next day. Of course such eyesores do little to endear Travellers to residents. But then again, the locals do not exclusively show their bonny sides:*

*Gates and trespass markers, walls of clay and the machinations of authorities metamorphosed into stone barriers bear witness to former Traveller camping sites. First their culture bled white, and now their physical expulsion.*

*Like grotesque monuments to intolerance, these monoliths girdle a great many Irish roads. The Travellers are left no place to go. And they never knew a place where they could stay.*

Interview with old Irish family, blocked site

Old Man

Everywhere you go young man, is all blocked in. It's all stones and all shored - everywhere where we used to camp before is all closed in and shored (off) we have nowhere to go. (17")

Three years and a half here, Sir and they're shifting us from one site to another and everywhere we go they're closing us in here. (8")

His son

(off) Do you know if you move a caravan today - well the next morning at 8 o'clock it'll be blocked out the same as that there with a heap of clay - (on) as you move they keep blocking you and blocking you out - it's as simple as that. They don't want you on the ground. That's the way they really do it like, do you know what I mean? (15")

Interview Johnny Collins, tinsmith, ext

I feel there is no future for any traveller in Ireland - or for the biggest majority of them anyway. I think you'll see an awful lot of people emigrating to England - at least they'll get jobs in other countries when they can't get it in their own native country. We are Irish people - we're more Irish than the Irish are themselves. I'm not a history man but I have been told that. That the travellers are the real Irish people in Ireland. But we don't feel like that - we don't be treated like that - we do be treated the opposite - like the black people in Africa. The black people all over the world. So discrimination is very tough for us, so we don't get any opportunities, our kids don't get any opportunities and of course as an Irishman I feel sorry about that. Like everybody else in his native country we should be treated as equals - we've got to pose and act as equal people - we should be treated as equal. But it doesn't work that way. Of course I'm sorry to see that, especially in my own country. Any man would feel the same in his own country if he wasn't treated as equal to anybody else. (69")

Dissolve

Title

Song for Mary  
Emigration

SONG FOR MARY

*I write this song for Mary  
For I am going away  
This song is only for Mary  
In my heart she will always stay*

*I write this song for Mary  
She's my only love  
Without her I will die  
I will never smile again*

*When I get to Britain  
I will write to her every day  
If I had work in my own country  
I would never go away  
I will leave my heart in Ireland  
And I am on my way*

*I write this song for Mary  
My tears are dripping away  
I will send for Mary  
One fine summer day.*

Title: Swansea - England

Mr O'Brien at night in front of chemical plant

Well when we were in Ireland things were very bad and there wasn't much doing. There was no such thing as dole or anything like that at the time. And things wasn't as good as in this country. Everyone was talking about this country - how good it was and so the most of us emigrated to this country. We had nothing. (16")

It's pure hell to tell you the truth. It's hell, this site. The people are falling asleep here from this factory at the back of me. This factory keeps people falling asleep here. (10")

It's very very unhealthy. And sometimes that big chimney there - see that big chimney - that lights up all this ground - lights up all this place completely. With gas - blowing off gas. A few months ago they had some explosion there - they had police - ambulances - everybody had to go there - they thought the place was going to blow up. (22")

they not even warned us about it. And everybody in the locality knew about it but down there we didn't know about it And it was ready to blow up completely. So that's it. (12")



## Interview with Tom at Briton Ferry, exterior day

Tom

You don't get nothing for nothing no more. Because everybody is out of work and if anyone has got a bit of scrap they want money for it now. When they were working they didn't mind (20" off)

they were glad to get rid of the rubbish but now you've got to pay for it. Take less money at the end of the day. Well it took me two weeks to collect all this.

It's hard to make a living out of it because it's depression everywhere isn't there?

## Narration 13

Although we realised our tour wouldn't be calling on the most scenic landmarks of Wales, nowhere else have we encountered anything like Swansea. Meanwhile we have developed a second sense for where to meet up with Travellers: there, where two highways intersect with a railway line and in the background a sewage plant with the entire area buttered to an airport. Many English industrial cities have become synonyms for the buyout attitude typical of late capitalism. What remains behind is a desert of civilisation, inhabited by those left behind by progress. Little distinguishes the now unemployed terrace house owner over-burdened by debt from those who call nothing their own. No wonder the Travellers are such a thorn in the eyes of the locals. Although for far and wide not a single tree grows, the citizens don't protest against the refinery, but against the ones camping alongside.

On the other hand the symbiotic relationship between industries and Travellers leads to extreme climaxes regarding for instance hazardous waste disposal. Many drums containing poisonous substances simply stand unattended. Coincidence? Sooner or later a few plucky scrap men turn up, dump the poison into the nearest waterway, and then are paid their refunds for returning the empties.

"Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose."

Title: Cardiff

Interview with New Age Travellers

Mrs Jemma

Up to now if it comes to gypsy rights we didn't have any. Because if a gypsy officer would come up to us to see about re-siting or something he'd say. "Oh no no, you're not Gypsies, you're hippies. So you don't count." And so all of a sudden now that they've taken the rights away, we're all the same people. (20" off) But when it came to be given any rights, we didn't have any. (5")

Justin That's our relationship (on) I suppose we're a problem. 5"



Jemma

And it's being exaggerated beyond belief this year. To the point where they say, "Oh god, its' time to do something about these people", you know, but we haven't changed we are just the same as we have been. (12")

Jemma

it wasn't directed so much at us, as at all the Irish travellers that are coming over. That we were being used, media wise, to provoke the situation, so that they could say it's time to have new laws because these people are being so out of order. (16")

#### Narration 14

The irony of fate: as the traditional Travellers give up their nomadic lifestyle, their barrel-tops are purchased by New Age Travellers. Today, the New Agers are nearly the only people left on the road. The A-40 was formerly one of the major routes used by the Irish Tinkers: leaving Fishguard's ferry harbour they would cross down from Wales into England, continuing on as far as London. Today meeting an Irish Traveller along this route is a rare event. Many consider the New Age Travellers as Hippies embarked upon an adventurous lark - others sympathise with the New Agers as people who also reject living in a world of norms and conventions.

Regardless of whatever brought the New Agers on the road, they suffer from the same repressions as they themselves. Only, the Irish Travellers receive in England a few token privileges as an ethnic minority. But the resentment brewing against the New Agers is directed towards and abused against the Irish Travellers, the slate of new laws applicable to everyone regardless of background or heritage.

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Title

Hills and Hollows  
Living on the Edge

HILLS AND HOLLOWS

*Hills and hollows  
You seem to climb  
In your heart  
No peace of mind  
Travelling through  
This troubled land  
Can't find hope to live on  
Smoky cities, noisy sounds  
Mental patients walking around  
Stolen cars late at night  
Drunken people having a fight  
Bags of glue, treasure dust  
Smoky engines in a line  
Black chimneys with thick black smoke  
In this land there's no hope  
Hills and hollows you seem to climb  
Seeking for peace of mind  
Grave problems, full of fear  
Upset people, do not care  
Crying out for broken hope  
All they have is plenty of fumes and smoke.*

Title: Bristol

Mr McDonnagh, carpet hawker, exterior

I do it for less than half price. I won't charge you for looking. I do it for less than half price. It is washable. (8")

(Narration, voice only for hawking in Bristol, off:)  
Somebody says, ah, some of you gypsies was around here last week, and I bought something off them and I don't want to buy off the gypsies, why don't you go on and work right for yourself. A lot of people gets jealous of each other, somebody buys one, somebody goes along phones up the police, the police come along and hassle you. Because it's only jealousy of each other. It looks nice but it is not the real McCoy. It is fancy. It is good enough to last twelve months, maybe more if you are looking after. But in the caravan where I come from it wouldn't last a week with the kids in and out and the muck. (34")

Site in a field at Bradleystock near Bristol

Kids (in chorus:)

We want a camp! We want a camp! We want a camp! (cont.)

Mrs Mary (walking in front of camera)

(off) I am one of the travellers that live here on a transit site that I opened in a field because people had no place else to go. And this road is called the "the road to nowhere", (on) because it doesn't solve problems for to take us off one piece of the road - only fifty yards across the road - and put us on another road. The problem lies with the local authority, and the local government of Bristol. (off) We really don't ask for much, only a proper home - we have our homes - now we're asking for a piece of ground to put them on.

Sign in the foreground on the road:  
Build your own dreamhomes

Narration 15

We are on our way back to London. The mind racing with pictures. Enriched by another piece of European reality - and having lost a few more romantic ideals.

(Music)

Mr Mike Mc Carty

(off) We used to have our fires lighting outside and we'd all have our playing accordions and our fiddles and step dancing. I was a story teller and a folk singer. We used to freely enjoy life. And people used to come from far and near to see us - but that's all finished with now - the television took over - and if you're caught lighting a fire outside the fire brigade will come out and quench you. (26")

Narration 16

Again the Travellers encounter an uncertain fate. Until recently each county was responsible for maintaining a set number of Traveller camping sites. The majority of districts did not fulfil their obligations. So here the Travellers couldn't be shifted easily. But now a new law defines simply stopping a caravan off-road as an illegal act - regardless of whether a caravan site exists or not. The caravan is confiscated, and those unable to pay their fines are placed behind bars. With such bankrupt attempts to master the consequences of a self-made problematic, the mess is just multiplied.

Mike Mikeen McCarty exterior

We didn't choose to stop travelling we didn't choose to come into the cities. We wasn't left to stay in the country. It was the country we were used to. We were always hard working people out of the country - tarmacing and concreting and everything, but we never got that long staying. We had to keep moving on and moving and moving. (20")



# Narration 15

Over the course of centuries the Travellers have coped with changing living conditions by adjustment. Their cultural heritage, however, is no longer passed on. Their's is a knowledge transmitted by oral tradition. As the elders die off, so too disappears their cultural legacy.

## Interview with Mr McCarty part 2 in his caracan

We all came to the same decision that there's no life on the road for the young people. And putting a travelling man into a house is like getting a man from cardboard city and putting him in prison. He'd sooner be in cardboard city than in prison. Its the same way with travelling people. We wasn't reared in house. We didn't know anything about houses. That's why I say to you it's the end of the road.

(off) They feel very bitter because they want to be on the road the travelling people. Young or old. I want to die on the road. We can't do that. (11")

## Narration Chrissy Ward (Epiloge)

### MOUNTAIN

Bury me high in a mountain  
In a coffin made of all glass  
High in the mountain  
Where I can see the stars  
Then I can look down and see you  
And walk all around  
With bright light from a lonely star  
If you bury me low, I'll smother I know  
And lonely without the stars  
Or bury me in the fork of a tree  
How happy I will be  
The robins will sing for me  
Won't need no flowers or visitors at my grave  
Won't need no wreathes or stone for my head  
Just bury me high in a mountain.

The End