

MUSIC

Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity

George Alfred Beckett

Collected by Ron MacEachern from the singing of Amby Thomas

Tune: "Peter Emberley"

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1. George Alfred Beckett is my name as you may understand
Brought up by honest parents, I belong to Newfoundland
In a pleasant little village so beautiful and grand
Near the Atlantic Ocean at a place called Old Perl'can.
2. My parents reared me tenderly, the truth I will make known
And at the age of sixteen years I left my native home.
How little did my mother know when she sang sweet lullabye
What country I might travel to, or what death I might die.
3. To the coal fields of Cape Breton, my course I first did stray,
And for to get employment, I landed at Glace Bay.
How little did my parents know when they bid me goodbye
That awful crime I would commit, and be condemned to die.
4. 'Twas early last autumn as you may understand,
To drive me out to Tower Road I engaged this taxi man.
He little thought as we rode on, I had an iron bar;
Those dreadful wounds for to inflict and rob him in his car.
5. From the scene I made a quick escape; to get home was my plan.
I left Glace Bay and sailed away back home to Newfoundland.
'Twas but a few weeks afterwards, the police were on my trail;
Arrested for this murder and brought to St. John's jail.
6. From there back to Cape Breton, my final trial to stand,
And never more to see again my own dear native land.
The jury found me guilty and the judge to me did say:
"For this murder you shall hang, young man, on the 30th day of May."

7. Now before my execution there is something I would tell
Of all the friends in Newfoundland, and the one I love so well;
It's near the city of Sydney, my mouldering bones will lay;
I'm waiting for our Saviour's call on that great judgment day.

Recording:

[George Alfred Beckett](#), 1978. Amby Thomas. T-1066. Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University.