ETHNIC HUMOR IN LITERARY JOURNALISM:
A COMPARISON OF ROBERT LOUIS BURNS WHO USED ETHNIC JOKES
IN HIS NEWSPAPER COLUMNS AND FINLEY PETER DUNNE
WHO WROTE AN ETHNIC NEWSPAPER COLUMN

A Thesis by
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Submitted to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and
the faculty of the Graduate School of
Wichita State University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

July 2006
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I have examined the final copy of this Thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Liberal Studies.

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Patricia L. Dooley, Committee Chair

We have read this thesis and recommend Its acceptance:

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Anthony P. Gythiel, Committee Member

______________________________
William F. Woods, Committee Member
DEDICATION

To the memory of my beloved grandfather,
Robert Louis Burns
who brought me to experience the peace and joy of the Lord at an early age.

And
To the memory of my father
Raeburn Jay Bell
who let me know the value of education
by working 18 hour days when I was a child
to make sure my brothers and I would be able to attend college.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A work of this kind is not achieved by the efforts and knowledge of one person, no matter how independent one wishes to be. Therefore my heartfelt thanks are due for many dear people.

First, I would like to thank my husband and our two daughters, Jennifer and Jill, for their prayers and encouragement, also for Jennifer who gave me valuable advice in my research efforts and who provided me with the following Shakespeare quote:

“Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt.” Measure for Measure 1, iv, 78

Then I would like to thank those many dear friends who also prayed for and helped in this work; especially Myra Jonker, who donated a computer and the church members who got it running, and Nina Fiscus, who helped me carry piles of heavy books to and from the library, and who also searched the internet for areas for me to use in my research.

The people in two organizations helped greatly in my efforts to come back to school: Dr. Deema DeSilva, of Student Support Services, and LaWanda Hope-Field, of the McNair Scholars program. Both of these organizations are federally funded, but these ladies know their students by name and also what work they have done. Each organization is designed to help students reach their goals.
I have been very fortunate to have studied under really excellent instructors. There are some that I would like to now acknowledge that were instrumental in preparing me for this final work:

Les Anderson taught, with excellence, a communication class that allowed us to participate in writing for a book that celebrated the 125th anniversary of Harvey County.

Dan Close created the excellent class that inspired this paper, and that allowed us to have practice in immersion writing, Alternative Journalism.

Dr. Katherine Hawkins had the marvelous ability to make her students comfortable with both theory and statistics in her group communication and quantitative classes.

Dr. Susan Huxman clearly taught the form and essence of formal structured papers such as this, and made it quite interesting!

Dr. Sharon Iorio inspired one to imitate her gift in making history come alive-to all of the senses!

Dr. Craig Miner had our Wichita and WSU history class do in-depth primary research with both newspapers and interviewing. The skills learned there have been invaluable in preparing this thesis.

Dr. Brigitte Roussel has the gift of unlocking the creative flow in all of her students.

Those people who were directly involved with this thesis truly made it a joint project of joy:

I appreciate the kindness of Bill Molash, who saved me from the many pain pills that about two and a half weeks of retyping my thesis to be compatible with the
university computers would have made necessary. He efficiently scanned the thesis into the university system. Thank you.

I appreciate the courtesy and kindness of my committee members; Dr. William Woods and Dr. Anthony Gythiel. It was an honor to have such highly respected professors read my work.

Words fail me when I try to thank Dr. Patricia Dooley, my thesis advisor. She made a difficult history seminar, (where I learned how to analyze an artifact which was unbelievably helpful in my research), seem like an evening with friends, and even had us all to dinner at her house to share our finished papers! My paper from that class was the start of this work, and she has steadfastly encouraged me ever since, through many ups and downs. She consistently, cheerfully found ways to fix things and situations that seemed impossible. She has given of herself and her belongings, without stint. She sets quite an example to follow as she works tirelessly teaching, publishing, and mentoring. Thank you, and May the Lord bless you richly Dr. Dooley.
ABSTRACT

Finley Peter Dunn, a reporter and editor, started a syndicated newspaper column in 1893, and Robert Louis Burns, a Presbyterian Minister, started one in 1966. Why were they both remembered as humorists? Was Burns influenced by Dunne’s work? Why did they use Ethnic Humor in their columns? What impact did their columns have on their readers?

I found that both writers fit the criteria of literary journalists. They used humor in their writing to make their readers laugh, but also to make their points. Dunne wanted to sell newspapers, and Burns wanted to make people forget their cares. Dooley, the bartender in Dunne’s column, was Burns’ nickname. Presidents, governors, and your next door neighbor read the columns, which accurately mirrored the pulse of the nation and our human frailties.
Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) stated:

"Humor must not professedly teach and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live" . . . (Fanning, p. 217).

When I was in an English Literature class several years ago, one of the authors we studied was Peter Finley Dunn. I remember thinking at the time, "Why, that is what my grandfather did in the syndicated newspaper column he wrote after he retired on his farm back in the hills of Arkansas!" Like Dunn, my grandfather used ethnic humor in such a way as to comment on issues of the times while making people laugh and read their columns. His name was Robert Louis Burns—after the old Scottish Bard that he claimed for an ancestor. Although I adored this grandfather who helped raise me until my father returned after three and a half years of service in World War II, I also felt that his work and life stood by themselves and were suitable for review for this paper on literary journalism. I have attempted to consider the work on these two writers objectively, but since Burns is my grandfather, I have had more interest in his work. My grandfather was full of joy. His humor was contagious. One of my grandfather's goals for writing his column was to preserve the history of the Arkansas Hillbilly as the 20th century began. I wish to continue his work.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Perspectives</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Burns Primary Documents</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

"To see oursel' s as ithers see us"

This line from the poem "To a louse," by the old Scottish Bard, Robert Burns, refers to wanting power from a "giftie" to be able to see ourselves as others see us (Burns, p.494). We do not need a "giftie." There are gifted writers who have given us this insight through their humorous writing for newspaper readers. Two of these writers are Finley Peter Dunne (1867-1936) and Robert Louis Burns (1893-1975). They were known as humorists, although each had other important roles in life. They had different backgrounds, but each writer was able to convey truth as he saw it, in a way that their readers could accept and enjoy.

Why should there be a study comparing the humor of Dunne and Burns? They influenced people. They persuaded people. They were both salt and light and dealt directly with current troublesome situations in a way that people could accept and even laugh about. Dunne was of Irish descent, while Burns had ancestors from both Scotland and Ireland. These two writers used dialects that were prevalent in their areas of this country in the 1890s and later. Dunne wrote in the Irish brogue that was spoken in a small area of Chicago where he grew up. Burns used the language of the early Scottish-heritage settlers in the southern mountains of the United States, who were known as "Hillbillies."

These two colorful and humorous dialect writers contributed greatly to our culture's newspaper history, along with other dialect writers of their time. They continually addressed important current political and spiritual issues in a funny and memorable way.
Dunne's writings were collected in books, while Burns published many of his ideas in song. Two people are not many to study, but they are part of the whole, and each small amount of knowledge observed and learned can be part of a whole answer in communication skills. These two authors have enriched our literary history.

I started to think about humor, and how important it is for physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Then I considered more specifically the overarching question of how humor can be used, especially in the area of influencing the thoughts and actions of others. Humor can be simply defined as "a comic quality causing amusement" (Webster's Dictionary). Preston (1997) quotes from Vine DeLoria, Jr., as giving a good reason for humor: "When a people can laugh at themselves and laugh at others and hold all aspects of life together without letting anybody drive them to extremes, then it seems to me that people can survive" (pp.474-475).

Literary journalism has been defined as writing that has the immediacy, accuracy, importance, and persuasive power of good journalism, but also the dialogue and story telling of good literary work. Writers in the field of literary journalism either are to begin with, or make a decision to become, personally immersed in their subject areas to insure an accurate frame of reference. The newspaper columns of Dunne and Burns are good examples of a type of literary journalism with a broad audience. Not everyone shows up in a church pew every week, nor reads a newspaper from cover to cover, but jokes and funny stories from a newspaper column are passed along from friend to friend-at the local bar-at an office or plant-at a card game or golf course, or by e-mail to diverse groups. Humor reaches a far more diverse audience-a kind of a grass roots effort to get across an important awareness of how we, as a people, can err. Humor is palatable and sticks in the
mind, but it can hold the truth as a catalyst to make major changes in first thoughts, then
actions. This genre is a powerful tool to learn to use.

This thesis consists of a textual content analysis and comparison of a sample of the
newspaper columns of Burns and Dunne. The goal is to add my grandfather to the list of
writers who, like Dunne and the other authors already studied by scholars in the field of
literary journalism, have provided their readers with humor, solace, and refreshing
insights into the world we live in. In addition to this introduction, this first chapter
provides biographical information on the two writers, discusses several relevant
theoretical perspectives, reviews literature from the field of literary journalism, and
describes the method used in the study. Chapter two provides and discusses the study’s
research findings, and the third and final chapter provides a conclusion.

**Biographical Background**

Both Dunne and Burns were influenced by the city of Chicago, a place that, like other
large teeming cities, stirs poets. Edgar Lee Masters, in his poem "Chicago," wrote:

> . . . It has spread
For many a rood its boundaries, like the sprawled
And fallen Hephaestos, and has tenanted
Its neighborhoods increasing and unwalled
With peoples from all lands. . . .
It reaches out its hands,
Powerful and alive
With dreams to touch to-morrow, which it wills
To dawn and which shall dawn. . .(p. 461).
Both Burns and Dunne had dreams. Dunne was born in this city, and Burns began his ministry – a rebirth – only a few miles away. Dunne’s neighborhood, although unwalled, was Irish. The Mr. Dooley sketches were set here. Dunne grew up in what Mark Twain called the Gilded Age. He was 26 years old when Burns was born. Stephen Crane wrote about New York City. His Maggie of the Streets was published the year Burns was born. In Paris, Victor Hugo also wrote about the downtrodden in Les Miserables and Notre-Dame de Paris. Both Dunne and Burns championed the downtrodden in their writings.

Robert Louis Burns

Robert Louis Burns was born in Clyde, Arkansas, in 1893. His earned his grade and high diplomas at Cane Hill, Arkansas, and he went for further education to Missouri, where he attended Chillicothe College, in Missouri, and to Chicago, where he studied at the Moody Bible Institute and McCormick Seminary. He served as a Presbyterian minister in Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas, Illinois, and Arkansas. Cousin Conrow Miller wrote of him after his death:

. . . the late Louis (Dooley) Burns, whose sense of humor was as catching as his laugh. Although a man of cloth for many years, his religion was a joyous affair which gladdened the hearts of the many he touched (1971).

As Burns' father had been called Robert, Burns was called Louis, except when he used Bob Burns for his columns. Everyone had actually called him Dooley for as far back as I can remember. Perhaps the nickname was in reference to the character of Mr. Dooley, created by Dunne, as Miller reported; " . . . at an early age Burns spent much time involved in variety shows, writing and composing for the others also" (1971).

Burns owned half of a small mountain near Clyde. His grandparents had homesteaded
it when they came in a covered wagon from Kentucky. He also had a small newspaper and tobacco store. When he was around 30-years-old he was afflicted and almost died of tuberculosis, which had killed his father. It was at this time he decided to study for the ministry. With his mother, wife, and two small children to support, his deep, beautiful voice helped earn their living as he sang as an extra in the Chicago Opera House while he studied in McCormick Seminary in Chicago. He later wrote and published songs and hymns and taught others how to play the accordion. He was as much at home in a big city as he was on the mountainside, although he never stopped telling his hillbilly jokes. Words and music bubbled out of him like a fountain. He wrote and composed quickly and well.

Miller stated: [Burns] "reached hundreds [of others than his own church] through his weekly column in several papers. It was filled with humor, homely philosophy and news, both real and imaginary" (1975). Overall, about one third of the space in his columns dealt with spiritual and church issues, about one third dealt with political concerns, and about one third was filled with jokes, anecdotes, and comments of olden times. Threaded throughout the columns were bits of news about homefolks. The tone was warm and personal and crackled with joyous energy. Church issues of concern included getting children to church, breaking down denominational walls, and robbing God of tithes. Often jokes were used to get his point across. Sometimes the jokes were just funny jokes. Grandpaw Snazzy was often featured in the jokes as a typical old day hillbilly. Burns, however, pulled no punches. When he had something to say, he said it, based on scriptural authority. These messages were more impacting by being sandwiched in between jokes.
Burns explained one reason he wrote his column when he answered a letter of thanks from one of its readers:

I hope I can make someone laugh their cares away and I'll do my best, last, and always. I won't be like the country boob who was trying to spark a girl in town. He was so uncouth that [when] she said to him "You tickle me," [that] he said, "Aw shucks, you tickle me first." (n.p.)

The columns were fast paced, with a seemingly unlimited flow of small, funny jokes. He was well aware of the cares of his people. His six foot eight inch frame was continually stooping over a little to talk kindly to each person in his path—whether he knew him or her or not. He called continually in the homes and businesses of his people, often driving way out in the country to comfort someone injured or ill who could not come in to church. He was often asked to return to a former parish to conduct weddings, baptisms, and funerals—and he would—sometimes driving back hundreds of miles, because of the love that he had for them. His joy had a deep spiritual base and a true dignity. Underneath the humor sprang a joy that only true spirituality can give. It caused him to overcome tragic circumstances in his own life, and to be of true comfort to others.

The beauty and dignity of this minister and humorist's well-lived beliefs are exemplified by these words written by the old Scottish Bard, Robert Burns:

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,

They round the ingle form a circle wide;

The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,

The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride; . . .
Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,

The saint, the father, and the husband prays: . . .

From scenes like this old Scotia's grandeur springs,

That makes her loved at home, revered abroad (Hill, p.64).

Craigie explains how "This picture of a humble cottage. . . by a solemn transformation, rises above all material cares, and expands into a temple of holiness . . . (p. 77). Even so, the following benediction of a 1967 Christmas message in his column helps to transform the readers of Burns’ column into a higher level:

May this Christmas bring to you the blessed assurance of an eternal home in a better world-the fellowship of the redeemed who praise God from whom all blessings flow and the love divine all loves excelling that makes the joy of heaven to earth come down. Amen brother (December 7, 1967).

**Finley Peter Dunne**

Finley Peter Dunne was born in 1867 and died in 1936. He graduated from high school in the near west side of Chicago – the midst of the Irish Catholic community at that time. He came from a large family in contrast to Burns, who was an only child. Dunne was always in a big city environment in contrast to Burns, because Clyde actually had only a General store that included the post office boxes between the barrels of pickles and candy, old men sitting and spitting on the porch, and a boardwalk with a hitching rail between the porch and the dusty or muddy road.

Ellis (1941) explained that Dunne's father would not send him to college: "It would be a waste of money, as he would only waste his time as he has done in high school. He is going to work” (p.15). Ellis (1941) went on to say that Dunne had worked hard on the
school's debate team, however, and had written both for the school paper and also for the small paper that he and his friends put out on their own for a few friends in school.

Dunne started working as an office boy in a newspaper when he was almost seventeen. His great advantage, as was Burns', was that he knew the people of the area so well, and that he was so well liked. They were both always out talking to the people, and, like this fragment of the old Scottish bard Burns' poem:

"A chield's amang you, taking notes.
And, faith, he'll prent it" (Brown, 1984, p.4).

Dunne began to write the Mr. Dooley essays in 1893, two months before Burns was born, but they were around for a long time. A number of them went into his first book: Mr. Dooley in Peace and War, published in 1898. By 1899, the essays were syndicated. Dunne wrote over 700 Mr. Dooley pieces. Books including some of these came out until 1919. Dunne continued working as a journalist and became editor of Collier 's magazine. Furnas (1991) wrote of Dunne; "Dunne wrote in dialect, but he did not consider himself to be a humorist. He considered himself a reporter-editor-writer and he hoped to be a newspaper publisher (p.571), but Dunne, like Burns, has been remembered by many as a humorist.

**Literature Review**

This section of the chapter reviews both current and older definitions of literary journalism, both in the United States and in the British Isles, as relevant to this thesis. As Dunne and Bums were heavily influenced by their ethnic backgrounds at the beginning of the 20th century, the older definitions are included from the British Isles, as they are still valid there, along with those of more recent writers from there. It also contains a review
section of writers on national humor and ethnic dialect journalism.

**Current and Previous Definitions of Literary Journalism in the United States**

In explaining the process that they used in their 1997 historical literary journalism anthology, *Art of Fact*, Ben Yagoda and Kevin Kerrane, wrote: "The key to this process was to bring some definitions to literary journalism, a profoundly fuzzy term. Most people are not acquainted with it; those who are tend to use it to signify different things. It sometimes seems to refer to nothing more specific than laudable nonfiction" (Yagoda, p.13). The two editors looked for specific aspects of the two terms, journalism and literary, for their choice of selections. The following strengths of journalism were sought for the pieces chosen:

- "It must first of all be factual"(Yagoda, p. 13).
- There must be "active fact-gathering-not just working from memory or sensory observation but doing what reporters call reporting "(Yagoda, p.13).
- It must have "currency-that a writer get on the story soon after it happened"(Yagoda, p.14).

The pieces chosen also showed the following two literary strengths:

- They needed to use dialogue instead of quotes, which Yagoda calls "antiliterary…quotes can turn into dialogue and [an] account of [a] fire becomes a scene"(Yagoda, p.14).
- They needed to be pieces that "displayed techniques or approaches that hadn't been seen before."(Yagoda, p.15).

Yagoda and Kerrane divided their final selections into three historically chronological groups:
Both novelistic and dramatic set pieces of narrative journalism are represented in the first section.

The reporter at the forefront is the basis for the second section, because Yagoda said; "outsized and unabashed subjectivity can be a superb route to understanding"(Yagoda, p.16).

The final section is a showcase for those authors who "have artfully and fruitfully experimented with structure or chronology or even syntax"-a category labeled "Style as Substance"(Yagoda, p.16).

Yagoda and Kerrane stated that they hoped that their anthology would "make the case that literary journalism exists and is not an oxymoron"(Yagoda, p.16). Kerrane gives a final insight into the book's working definition of literary journalism when he wrote, "Ben Yagoda, my coeditor, describes literary journalism as 'making facts dance'. . . the double pleasure of true stories artfully told"(Kerrane, p.20).

Truth is an important principle of ethnography. Norman Sims, editor of the 1995 anthology, *Literary Journalism*, in the introductory piece, "The Art of Journalism," seemed to be aware of Lawrence Frey's definition of ethnography that "involves examining the patterned interactions and significant symbols of specific cultural groups to identify the cultural norms (rules) that direct their behaviors and the meanings people ascribe to each other's behaviors"(Frey, p.229). Sims quotes Samuel Johnson's 1775 statement: "The true state of every nation is the state of common life"(Sims, p.3), and explained further how Johnson "mentioned a small detail, the 'incommodiousness' of Scottish windows which 'keeps them very closely shut' that [Johnson] thought symbolized the national character"(Sims, p.3). Sims apparently agrees, since he wrote:
"Stories about wandering, work, and family-about the things that happen all the time-can reveal the structures and strains of real life (Sims, p.3). Sims sees the "outward characteristics of literary reporting [as] immersion reporting, accuracy, symbolic representation, complicated structures, and voice"(Sims, p. 5); but the "inner processes of creativity include access, the symbolism of facts, research strategies, and techniques shared with both fiction and ethnography"(Sims, p.5).

Mark Kramer's introduction to this anthology, "Breakable Rules for Literary Journalists," includes his definition of the term "literary journalism [as being] roughly accurate. The paired words cancel each other's vices and describe the sort of nonfiction in which the arts of style and narrative construction long associated with fiction help pierce to the quick of what's happening-the essence of journalism"(Kramer, p.21). Kramer enumerates what literary journalists have in common:

- They "immerse themselves in subjects' worlds and in background research"(Kramer, p.22).
- They "work out implicit covenants about accuracy and candor with readers and with sources"(Kramer, p.23).
- They "write mostly about routine events"(Kramer, p.27).
- They "write in 'intimate voice,' informal, frank, human, and ironic"(Kramer, p.28).
- Style counts, and tends to be plain and spare (Kramer, p.30).
- They "write from a disengaged and mobile stance, from which they tell stories and also turn and address readers directly"(Kramer, p.31).
- Structure counts, mixing primary narrative with the tales and digressions to
amplify and reframe events” (Kramer, p.32).

- They "develop meaning by building upon the readers' sequential reactions" (Kramer, p.33).

Kramer concludes with this claim: "Narratives of the felt lives of everyday people test idealizations against actualities. Truth is in the details of real lives" (Kramer, p. 34).

John C. Hartsock wrote in his 1998 article, "The Critical Marginalization of American Literary Journalism": "Literary journalism is, depending upon the degree of personal participation in the production of the report, an attempt at personal engagement of one's subjectivity with what too commonly has been objectified" (Hartsock, p.72). He defines literary journalism as "including those narrative nonfiction texts written largely by professional journalists drafting rhetorical techniques commonly associated with the 'realistic' novel and short story. The emphasis is on 'narrative' literary journalism as opposed to the more 'discursive' or expository essay form. . . literary journalism is an attempt to close. . . an epistemological gulf for readers between personal experience and information about experience" (Hartsock, p.62). In his book published in 2000, *A History of American Literary Journalism*, Hartsock explains that "in times of social transformation and crisis. . . a need emerges for a rhetoric that attempts to help one understand other subjectivities, particularly subjectivities at the heart of such transformation and crisis, narrative literary journalism in short (Hartsock, p.167). He reminds us that "before the modern era there had always been some form of narrative literary journalism" (Hartsock, 79), but that "A modern narrative literary journalism had emerged in the United States after the Civil War, one designed not to report objectified 'facts' but to provide a 'story' . . . one that fundamentally engages the subjectivities of
author and reader. . . the form has a historical locus, one situated at the intersection of true-life stories-or at least those stories making truth claims to phenomenal experience-that utilized novelistic techniques, were practiced by professional journalists, and of which literary critics took considerable note. . . "One critical problem that remains in defining literary journalism is that boundaries were not clearly understood at the turn of the [20th] century, when literary journalism [included] literary criticism and the discursive literary essay. . . [a century later] this is a usage still very much current in England"(Hartsock, p .40).

Current and Previous Definitions of Literary Journalism in the British Isles

Literary reviews have been included in this section from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, whose authors have distinct ethnic connections with Dunne and Bums.

Jeremy Treglown, in the introduction to the 1998 British anthology, *Grub Street and the Ivory Tower*, said that literary journalism is "often used now, especially in the U.S., to mean not journalism about books, but-perhaps by analogy with the publishing concept of 'literary fiction' -any journalism which can be thought of as having lasting value" (Treglown, p. ix). Stefan Collini defines literary intellectual discussions that are carried on in the 'literary' pages of newspapers and periodicals'-forums which [are]. . being rapidly superseded (and radically transformed) by the Internet"(Treglown, p. ix). Collini's definition is reflected in the pieces of this anthology, which looks at both high brow and low brow writing about writing. The low brow writing was found on Grub Street.

Grub Street, (Milton Street), at the end of the 17th century, actually implied an area rather than a street, 'the 'huckster' area of London, and the people living or working there. One gets the sense of people who have worked hard for a poor living in unpleasant, harsh
surroundings. Early literary study at universities was "confined to the Bible and the early classics" (Treglown, p. ix), but, "historically, the study of English literature began in Grubb Street" (Treglown, p. ix). This book's main argument is that "Literary journalism and literary scholarship grew up together in the same neighborhood and both can be found there still" (Treglown, p. ix).

Treglown speaks of the work of a pioneer of Grub street, Henry Fielding, as an example of the "main impulses behind the criticism discussed in these pages, especially "humour, exuberance, a sense of performance, and a desire to be read" (Treglown, p. xi). Jenny Uglow explain further that "Humour, Fielding claimed, was the most potent of critical tools, both literary and moral, because it could chart the deviation from Good Breeding through excess and wild individuality, laughing mankind out of their follies and vices" (Uglow, p.14). Born in 1707, he was like other writers across the centuries who were "propelled by anger and conducted (their literary journalism) with wit" (Uglow, p.18). Fielding was well aware of the "harsh reality of literary life, that words equal money, food and survival" (Uglow, p. ll). His persona then, was a "man-of-the-people, the ex-prize-fighter, Captain Hercules Vinegar, . . .[who] let Fielding be fierce without being solemn" (Uglow, p.9).

Another fierce writer was Harri Webb 1920-1994, a "Welch writer who wrote; "Poetry that 'makes nothing happen' is something we cannot afford" (Webb, p.198). Meic Stephens explains that "Harri made hardly any distinction in his verse and prose between the literary and the political, the two were so closely linked in his mind" (Stephens, p.7), and also that although Webb was "no politician, at least not in the usual sense, he therefore used the best means at his disposal in an attempt not to describe his country, but
to change it" (Stephens, p. 11). Webb was not alone in his views. Keidrych Rhys, the Welsh journalist and editor had a "combative personality and iconoclastic views which chimed with his own" (Stephens, p.7).

Authors in another Gaelic neighbor, Scotland, in the time period between Fielding and Webb, had a better way of working with literary journalism and scholarship. Grevel Lindop writes that "in Victorian Scotland. .literary journalism and scholarship were not two things but one-or rather they formed the ends of a spectrum. People, publishers, and periodicals could move to and fro along the spectrum, sometimes appearing more scholarly and sometimes more journalistic, but the two ends had not yet moved so far apart that the middle segment had snapped"(Lindop, p.52). Treglown points out that "Grevel Lindop reveals how much DeQuincey owed to his academic connections in a Scottish intellectual economy in which 'authors, editors, publishers and professors changed roles with the greatest of ease" (Treglown, p. x).

John Sutherland, from the current viewpoint of the 167-year-old English department at University College London, acknowledges Lindop's view of "the nourishment which journalism can get from contact with universities and university people (specifically in the literary world around the great Scottish universities in the early nineteenth century)," but he goes on to say; "I shall approach the same topic from the other side; the stimulus which universities-specifically their English departments-can derive from contact with the world of journalism"(Southerland, p.58). He spoke of this type of leadership giving an introduction of "new journalistic alertness and breadth of vision"(Sutherland p.69).

An Irish literary journalist who lived in London before the U.S. Civil War, Fitz-James O'Brien (1828-1862) came to New York in 1851. Wayne Kime, in his introduction to
O'Brian's work, said; "this versatile author [was] a man strikingly attuned to the fashions, enthusiasms, and concerns that manifested themselves in his adoptive city and country" (Kime, p.10). Nicknamed, "The Baron") (Kime, p.23), O'Brian was reported to have the "Celtic alacrity for combat" (Kime, p.9), but also had the "free-ranging exuberance of Bohemian attitude with the contemporary flowering of comic liberation on both sides of the Atlantic" (Kime, p.25). "Just before the Civil War, O'Brian was among the first persons in the United States to write weekly columns under a byline" (Kime, p.33), which he wrote from 'the man-about-town' viewpoint. He had the same view on wit as *Vanity Fair*, a comic weekly magazine with the motto "More can be accomplished by good-natured raillery then by envenomed wit" (Kime, p.26). Kime reports that William Winter wrote after O'Brian's death in the Civil War; "He aimed to achieve the highest triumph of his art, to interpret the passing age, to beat out the music of human activity,

To shed a something of celestial light

Round the familiar face of every day" (Kime, p.28).

Kime reported that O'Brian had sometimes used, among others, the persona of "The Irishman, profound, humorous, and pathetic by terms, and terminating every article with an entreaty to advance him five dollars" (Kime, p.18). There were other American literary journalists that relied on the Irish wit of their heritage. Over a hundred years later Finley Peter Dunne used a Chicago bartender, Mr. Dooley, to get his points across in a funny and memorable way. Holger Kersten commented on the fact that "Mr. Dooley, as an American of Irish descent and a Catholic, actually belonged to two minority groups, both of which had traditionally faced considerable opposition and even physical abuse" (Kersten, p. 104), and as Saul Bellow wrote; "Oppressed people tend to be
National Humor and Ethnic Dialect Journalism

Pinsker explains further; "Humor that holds a serious card up its sleeve is the natural enemy of totalitarianism, just as laughter itself often becomes the first casualty of people with pinched faces and strong, self-righteous convictions. In this sense, versions of the little man were blows struck on behalf of the individual, however much he might be clueless about his condition and essentially powerless to change it" (Pinsker, p.4).

Holger Kersten speaks of the [humor of the] dialects of European immigrants being an important part of Vaudeville, in that "in front of an audience that shared similar experiences. . . the collective laughter created a sense of community in the audience and elevated the comedians onto a plane where they became symbolic figures of displacement and alienation. . . this form of verbal humor was a coping mechanism that alleviated some of the strains put upon immigrants by the rough living conditions of a highly competitive industrial society" (Kersten, p.6). Kersten also pointed out "the urge to use dialect may also have come from a desire to approximate the real speech of real people, the wish to create a literature that depicted its objects more realistically" (Kersten, p.2). Dunne was a good example of this effort. "Dunne. . .had tried to make Dooley talk as an Irishman would talk who has lived thirty or forty years in America, and whose natural pronunciation had been more or less affected by the slang of the streets" . . .critics praised Dunne for the 'realistic,' true-to-life impression it [the dialect] conveys" (Kersten, p.103).

Not everyone has been pleased with ethnic dialect journalism. Early critics “found what they regarded as an incompetent use of the English language unacceptable: (Kersten, p.94). Kersten reports that “psychologist Gordon W. Allport speaks of some
Webb agrees with the concept of a language unifying people when he defends the
use of national language in a letter advocating a Theatre for Wales; “National identity and consciousness reside in the language…As nowhere else I can think of, the language is the nation. That is what we mean when we sing 'o bydded i'r hen iaith barhau' ['Oh, long may the old language endure'](Webb, p.13).

Grace Eckley also alludes to communication that can unify a people, when she speaks of humor in America: "What constitutes American humor, what makes it distinctly American, develops from the uniqueness of the American nation, a uniqueness which in the nineteenth century flourished in regionalism and in dialect writing" (Eckley, p.52).

John Lowe says that there are several advantages in using dialect humor:

1. Through inversion, ethnic humor can become a weapon of liberation.
2. Humor can be used to bring people closer together in a community.
3. Humor can be viewed as the fountain of artistic creativity.
4. There can be pride in using dialect.
5. Humor can be used as a come-on and a mask.
6. In social situations conducive to humor, the atmosphere is relaxed (Lowe, pp.209 212).

Lowe explains about humor as a mask; "The comic newspaper column frequently used humor as a come-on and a mask, for under the pose was the preacher, and under the jokes was a jeremiad"( a prolonged complaint, or lament) (Lowe, p. 211). Lowe goes on to say that "Over and over these...folk-philosophers under the guise of making fun of rampant greed and corruption, manage to simultaneously present, frequently without overt moral commentary, the terrible conditions of the people they describe and the factors that led to those conditions"(Lowe, pp. 211-212).
Lowe states specifically that "three artists," [Dunne, Alexander Posey, and Langston Hughes] "use this ploy--the genre of ethnic newspaper columns that started with mock letters to the editor, which in turn evolved into regular columns" (Lowe, p.206)" to great advantage, mounting savage attacks on the central government and the excesses of mainstream capitalist society in a curiously disarming manner"(Lowe, p.210). Lowe called Dunne's Mr. Dooley "the greatest paradigm of this genre. [The columns were] originally intended to counter anti-Irish sentiment. . .Dooley accepted the stereotype imposed on him and inverted it"(Lowe, p.297).

Dunne's Mr. Dooley "started out as a commentator on local affairs. . . [but with the advent of the Spanish-American War in 1898 he] . . .changed into an outwardly naive but actually very shrewd observer and commentator on American politics. As Dunne's columns were syndicated, his protagonist's voice reached readers across the entire United States"(Kersten, pp. 101-102). I.C. Furnas agrees and says further; "there were admirers of Dooley for thirty years after the work appeared in 1893 . . . [his columns] were nationally syndicated and bound into books for your grandfather's age"(Furnas, p.570). Kersten explains; "Dunne attributed the favorable reception of his sketches to the fact that the Dooley pieces 'reflected the feeling of the public' on the Spanish-American War" (Kersten, p. 104).

Dunne's fellow writers were his friends and held him in high esteem. E. B. White said; "he wrote no second-rate stuff' (Furnas, p.572). George Ade shared; "I am sure that none of us ever regarded his output as 'humor' but merely truth concealed in sugarcoated idiom and dialect. . . [He] resented injustice, loathed sham, and hated the selfish stupidity that went with them. Anger, and a warm sympathy for the underprivileged underlay almost all
of the 'Dooley' sketches" (Dunne, F.P. p. xvii-xviii). Furnas reports: [Dunne] was not a word mincer. . .he made a vigorous most of the whip of scorpions. . .but he used it seldom" (Furnas, p.574). Kersten points out; "Finley Peter Dunne's Mr. Dooley succeeded in making his voice known" (Kersten, p. 104). Ammons agrees: "Dunne's columns both contributed to and reflected the public awareness of immigration as a force that was radically changing the urban United States at the turn of the [20th] century" (Ammons, p. 196).

Edward Bander quotes L. Harvard: [The Mr. Dooley sketches] were not merely witty; the fun and the Irish dialect was a mask, a 'jester's license', behind which Dunne, in a censorious age, could express his hatred of injustice, selfishness, pretentiousness, and stupidity. . . Using dialect, Dunne could say what he pleased about the stuffed shirts of politics and industry" (Bander, p.84). James DeMuth clarifies how he was able to do this; "as a comic editorialist [he] had immunity from libel" (DeMuth, p.30). In Dunne's words; "It occurred to me that while it might be dangerous to call an alderman a thief in English no one could sue if a comic Irishman denounced the statesman as a thief'(DeMuth, p.30).

Dunne's son, F.P. Dunne agreed and added; "He was always amused by the tendency of reaction in this country to cloak itself in piety. In 1902, when a ludicrous industrialist named George F. Baer had declared during a prolonged and bloody strike; 'The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for-not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God in his wisdom has given the control of the property interests of the country," then the following lines appeared in a sketch within his column:

"What d'ye think iv the man down in Pinnslyvanya who says th' Lord an' him is
partners in a coal mine?" Mr. Dooley replied, "Has he divided th' profits?" (Dunne, F.P., pgs.111-112).

**Theoretical Perspectives**

Since Dunne and Burns were both humorists, an exploration of relevant theory on humor and its role and function in communication was considered important. Humor is considered by many to be an essential part of communication, and understanding how it contributes to the communication process is an important endeavor. According to Preston, there are three broad categories of humor theory: cognitive perceptual theory, social-behavioral theory, and psychoanalytic theory. Preston defines cognitive-perceptual theory as that which "addresses the question of why jokes are funny by focusing on linguistic and semantic inappropriateness: the use of exaggeration and distortion, misdirection, paradox, double entendre, the disclosure of hidden similarities between dissimilar things, and the linking of that which is pragmatically plausible and that which is not"(p.472). Throughout the history of literature and entertainment media, humorists’ use of exaggeration and distortion is widespread. From the comedians who appear in clubs or on television shows, to the essayists who write books, to the journalists who publish humorous columns for the newspapers, the use of linguistic and semantic inappropriateness and other examples of what Preston refers to in his work on cognitive-perceptual theory are an important part of human communication. I thought that it would be fruitful to use Preston’s theory in my comparative analysis of the essays of Burns and Dunne.

Part of Burns' work also seems to fit in the psychoanalytic and related "release" theories which argue that "all people operate under constraints to think, speak, and act in
certain ways," and that" laughter provides relief from mental, nervous and/or psychic energy and thus ensures homeostasis after a struggle, tension, strain, etc." (Preston, 1997, p.474).

Arthur Koestler's "bisociation theory" emanates from the field of cognitive-perceptual theory: Humor results when a situation, experience, or idea is associated or bisociated with "two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference. Jokes creatively 'vibrate simultaneously on two different wave-lengths'. Humor is thus the product of the slippage between otherwise disassociated contexts"(Preston, 1997, p.473). Dunne's work seems to fit in this theory.

Methodology

For some time I have been curious about why my grandfather was called a humorist rather than a Presbyterian minister in the big front page article announcing his 1975 death in the Lincoln Leader, Lincoln, Arkansas. The Leader ran one of his columns, "Down in Arkinsaw," in its weekly publication with a circulation of about 1800. Lincoln had a population of about 1200, but the paper also served smaller communities and farms in this area. It was the part of the country that Burns' grandparents had homesteaded and where Burns had grown up. His family and friends from all over also subscribed to the paper, partly or all because of my grandfather's column. He was a greatly beloved pastor in the small churches where he preached, and kept in touch with a great many of his former parishioners as well as those old friends who had moved away from the Lincoln area. I knew that his columns reached a widespread group of faithful readers, and I began to suspect that his literary journalism was possibly one of the most influential and lasting areas of his work. This suspicion was increased when I first read some of the work of
Finley Peter Dunne. I decided to look closely at the work of these two literary journalists to see if there were indeed similarities in their work and backgrounds. I was curious to see if I could find answers to the following questions:

Why was being a humorist important in their lives?

Why did they choose to write in dialect?

What effect did their humor have on their readers?

Was the work of Burns influenced by Dunne?

First, I looked at the poetry and life of an earlier ancestor, at least as claimed by my grandfather, the old Scottish Bard, Robert Lewis Burns (1759-1796), to see if his writings might have influenced my grandfather's work. Then I spent time carefully remembering everything I could about my grandfather's life and work, and also what I have heard and read about what others have said about him and his work. Then I reread old letters and postcards from, to, and about my grandfather. The old letters included 21 “Down in Arkinsaw” columns that roughly corresponded with their dates. This set of columns was not then a random sample, yet from what I remember of the years of reading his work, it was a good sample of the areas, balance, and tone that typified his newspaper columns. After reading these letters and their attached columns, I explored whether I could acquire the rest of his newspaper columns using interlibrary loan. Eventually I was able to acquire them on microfilm, for a total of 228 columns.

For Dunne’s essays, I read books and articles by and about the life and works of Dunne. I checked dates and maps and family history to see if Dunne's work may have been available for my grandfather to read or hear about. Finally, I looked at books and articles on humor and dialect writing, and also books and articles on literary journalism.
CHAPTER TWO

Comparison and Analysis

The section of land, bordered by mighty rivers almost to the end of their journey to the sea, called Arkansas on a map, was a delight as seen through Burns' eyes and pen. It was inhabited by tall, thin, happy men, whose hair and beards were long and scraggily, and who had brown jugs that appeared to be permanently attached to one hand and a fishing pole or old shotgun in the other; tall, thin women whose hair, never cut, was pulled back into tight buns at the base of their scrawny necks, and who sometimes looked a bit grim and haggard. The women tended to lose a tooth and a little height with each child born. Their swarms of stair-step children played happily in the dirt and among the butterflies hovering above the field flowers and overgrown grass in front of the one-room cabins, which had chickens and pigs wandering in to pick up the crumbs of cornbread found on the dirt floors. No one bothered with shoes or toothpaste (with the exception of the so-called "Arkansas Toothpaste" that was actually chewing tobacco) in this slow and easy dreamland. Both men and women smoked their corn-cob pipes, and chewed and spit their "toothpaste." There was home-brewed moonshine, stored and drunk from the little brown jugs. There were "wampus" cats lurking in the thick, dark, cool, sweet-smelling piney woods above the abundant clear, cold water from "sprang branches," which provided both water to drink from a long-handled tin dipper hung on a handy overhanging tree, and also to wash their feet before all piled into the same bed at night, (with the children across the foot). There was incredible clean, fresh mountain air- cool at night even in the summer when one needed several hand-made quilts to keep warm.

There was a road into the area. One slowed down to go through the couple of inches of
fast clear water that ran over the rocky creek bed that crossed the road. An old mill could be glimpsed through the overhanging trees up and off to the right. Old landmarks were not torn down here. The road (dust or mud by now) went past the general store (with the post office boxes lined up on one wall inside- next to the pickles). The old timers sat on the stoop here to spin yarns, bask in the sunlight, and enjoy being alive. The air was alive with the sounds of flying grasshoppers, birds, and hound dogs.

Sometimes the men whittled, but most of the hand-made items were made by the women. Fancy embroidered tea towels, pillow-cases, counterpanes and pillow shams; quilts and hand-hooked or loomed or braided rugs were on sale at dusty little comers of a small restaurant or filling station, an occasional crafts fair, or at roadside booths along with fresh-churned butter, apples, walnuts, or dolls made with a walnut or dried apple for a head, a rag or wooden body, and dressed like the women with dresses and sunbonnets made from flour sacks. The wooden ones would have long, thin, flat, bare feet sticking out from under their long cotton shirts. Sometimes a 92-year-old pert little lady (like my cousin Rosa) would be in charge of the stand.

There was an abundance of dogwood, fruit and nut trees, and wild berries on the mountainsides and valleys. Fish and game were there for the catching. Firewood was there for the cutting. Not bothered by the electronic revolution, there was time and inclination to make their own music. There was an abundance of good, sometimes very intricate, music from banjos, guitars, fiddles, harmonicas, and accordions. Dancing was not stiff and formal, but very spirited and fast and full of fun. Even the language was musical, as the isolated mountaineers kept strong, soft traces of the Irish or Scottish Gaelic dialect of their ancestors in their speech.
What I thought was a corny dreamland when I was a child seems like heaven to me now. The appeal is a land and time where one had time to savor life – where one doesn't have to care so much what other people think – at least where crab grass in one's yard did not ostracize one, and where the exact new shade of this season's pink was not required to be suitably dressed. The reality, of course, was quite different from this utopian dream. There was hard work just to survive; many did not survive, as there was inadequate health knowledge and care. Infant mortality was high, so were mothers losing their lives in childbirth. There was very little cash money. There were hardships of illness and hunger. There was no indoor plumbing with resulting illness from contaminated water, and inadequately built homes with only fireplaces and pot-bellied stoves for warmth. Education was very limited. This picture, good and bad, was actually true of a certain number of mountain folk and their environment. However, present-day Arkansas, as in much of old-time Arkansas, was and is actually filled with bustling, hard-working successful people who support their university and their chambers of commerce.

The Hillbilly persona that Burns used in his dialect jokes enabled people to feel a little superior to someone – a little richer in this world's goods – a little more educated – certainly a little more sophisticated. Juxtapositioned between bits of small town news and opinions on world events or theological concerns, the Hillbilly jokes and references provided a bit of comic relief from the pressing concerns of the day and, by contrast, making the small town news more important. Burns often used the Hillbilly persona, as Molière used his characters of maids, to speak his own voice, to speak the deep common sense of life, and to carry his own point across without offending a king – or a newspaper readership.
It was important to Burns to help preserve this part of history as he wrote in this article of "Down in Arkinsaw": "I am dedicated to preserving for future generations the story of the Arkinsaw Hillbillies, who flourished at the turn of the century, [the 20th century] but have passed on into history (Burns, August 24, 1967).

A concise distillation of this story is seen in his music and words of “Oh Arkansas!” which was written in 1956 (See A 1-5). Excerpts from the verses were often used in Burns' columns to illustrate a point, with the reader directed to this song. The front cover of the souvenir edition (See A-I) shows a map of Arkansas (with additions of Big Rock and Bean Pole Ridge) and pictures Grand-paw with his beard, gun, jug, patched overalls, bare feet, and hound dog. The hound dog is quite happy to be chasing the pride of Arkansas: the Razorback Hog mascot of the University of Arkansas' football team. A special chorus was dedicated to Coach Frank Broyles (See A-5). Local and current pride was also addressed by a prominent verse added when Miss Arkansas became Miss USA:

Well, the prettiest girl in the world today
Is a hog-callin' gal from the U. of A.
You see her smile and how her fair face beams,
You know the little darlin' has been raised on turnip greens.
We've a feather stuck right up in our cap,
For this dear old girl has just put us on the map,
The razorback hogs are just all snout and jaw,
But our home-grown wimmin take the cake in Arkinsaw.
Oh Arkinsaw, you've been praised and you've been cuss'd,
But now's the time to put shoes on old Grand-maw (Coleman's Shoestore),
And join the celebratin' in the state of Arkansas (See A 2-4).

Arkansas women had other gifts besides beauty and hog calling according to Burns in verse 3:

The Amber club will show you how to chaw
I've seen a lot of women spit a mile in Arkansas (See A-4).

Now, Burns did not mind poking fun at himself as evidenced by this part of verse 8:

A lady from town said I just can't see
Why you country ginks Are all six foot three
Grand-Paw said, Ma'am In the Hill Bil-lie song
The reason that we're so tall
Is that we stay green so long (See A-5).

It's okay to poke fun at oneself and one's group. It promotes camaraderie and helps take the sting out of opposing groups' reaction as in verse 8:

There's just one thing that sticks down in your craw
Some folks laugh when you tell 'em
That you come from Arkansas (See A-5).

Actually, staying green for a long time also indicates unusually good health and long life, as do the lines in verse 3:

One day in Ft. Smith and for better or worse,
Bob said "Hold my hat, I've just got to nurse."
The race was on when he tried to catch Maw,
It is sure hard to wean-'em in the state of Arkansas (See A-3).

Part of the chorus of verse 6 also alludes to a long and lively life:
The good book says, Honor your Maw and Paw

Trub'l is how'm goin' to catch 'em

They get wild in Arkansas (See A-5).

An agreement of the long life found in Arkansas is also found on verse 1 where Burns claims: "But you live to grow whiskers in the state of Arkansas" (See A-2, 3). The reason to have a long and lively life is, according to Burns, to have a ripsnortin' good time. Some would say that a lot of fun is what contributes to a long and healthy life. The music and dance in Arkansas was certainly fun, almost frantic. For example, the tempo in Oh, Arkansas is similar to the tempo in Turkey in the Straw and in Chicken Dance. Burns says in his special chorus dedicated to Coach Broyles that in Arkansas "we all dance the jig" (See A-5), and in the chorus of verse 2 Burns says:

Oh, Arkansas, where the Devil's in the fiddle

You swing Sally Good'n and then you swing Grand-maw

If you want to be happy, shake a leg in Arkansas (See A-4).

Healthy, happy people can be quite prolific. Burns comments on the abundance of children in mountain cabins in verse 5:

A tourist broke down and was look'n for aid

A man with 20 kids was sittin' in the shade. . .

The tourist said, if they all call you Paw

Then God help me Mister I must be in Arkansas (See A-5).

Now Grand-paw, who was often quoted in Burns' newspaper columns, was certainly pictured as being content, although reported in “Oh, Arkansas” as being mistaken at different times for a bear, a mule, and Rip Van Winkle. Grand-paw was fond, very fond,
of eating and drinking as in verse 4:

We went out one night, Maw and Paw and Bob
A fancy dinner with corn on the cob
The hostess stared, Pa was eating so fast
But she said "Will you have more corn?
And I'll swear he passed his glass (See A-2, 3).

Burns explains further about corn in verse 8:

Grand-paw had a farm on the old hill-side
Where the com he rais' d was his joy and pride
It was the kind made you cut a rug
He didn't have it in his crib
But he had it in a jug (See A-5).

Moonshine, it was called in verse 4: "There is hot moonshine every night and day"(See A-3). It was certainly a lasting habit of Grand-paw as seen in verse 9:

When old Grand-Paw died it was quite a show
Everybody thot he'd go down below
When the Preacher said, Let's pass 'round the bier
A voice said in the Coff-in, don't forget that I'm in here (See A-5).

So here we have a picture of Arkansas as having a football team and a beauty queen to be proud of, a place where there is camaraderie to take the sting out of being looked down on by city folk, a place where vigorous health and long life exists, with plenty of fun and having family, food, drink, tobacco, music and dance for free-no wonder Burns said in verse 1 that "You ain't in heaven but you're on the way" (See A-2). This is what Burns
was projecting to his audience with his hillbilly dialect—a taste of near heaven—full of joy—and fun.

Before Burns went into the seminary to become a Presbyterian minister after almost having died of tuberculosis, when he was 27 years old with a wife and two small children living in Clyde, Arkansas, he helped produce *A Night on Broadway* (See A-6), which was full of vaudeville. Vaudeville was popular in 1920. Vaudeville used dialect humor. Look at the names on the bill: Nicodemus Snowball, Aberham Linkum Johnson, Queen Victory, and Hiram Birdseed. Burns sang, played instruments, and impersonated comedians (with, I imagine, great glee) in this production. The same talent and exuberance used in musical comedy and vaudeville carried into his ministry. Minstrel shows became a fun way to earn funds for his church in Wagoner, Oklahoma. The hillbilly jokes lasted longer, though.

The "Down in Arkinsaw" column was published in the *Lincoln Leader* starting in 1966 (Burns was then 73 years old). The *Prairie Grove Enterprise* and *Prairie Grove News* carried his columns, titled "News from Clyde" (See A-7). In a letter written between 1967 and 1969, Burns wrote: "The former Governor of Arkansas, Orval E. Faubus, is printing my newspaper column in his Ozark, Arkansas paper and other papers he publishes around the state" (See A-8, 9). In this letter he enclosed a copy of the article written for his column “News From Clyde” as published in the Prairie Grove newspaper. In this article he wrote about his Grandpaw:

Disappointed in his quest for a bride, he got hold of a Sears Rareback catalog and ordered him a good looking woman by mail. He was disappointed again, fer all he got was the dress the good looking woman was wearing in the catalog.
This is an example of the linking of "that which is pragmatically possible and that which is not," as explained by Preston as part of cognitive-perceptual theory. Another part of Preston's definition of cognitive-perceptual theory has to do with similarities between dissimilar things as seen in this example of Grandpaw's thinking:

Poor old Grandpaw. He thought the County Court House was a place to do a little sparkin', and woo a prospective bride. So, he put on his stiff celluloid collar, perfumed his whiskers; got on a mule and rode to Fayetteville to do a little courting.

In the same article is an example of exaggeration and distortion which is another facet of Preston's definition of cognitive-perceptual theory:

Unfortunately, he [Grandpaw] took along a little moonshine to fortify his strength and the only courting he got done was with the Sheriff who arrested Grandpaw on charges of being a bootlegger and put him in jail. When he got out of jail and ready to start home the old mule balked and wouldn't move a step. A doctor poured a little high life on him and that mule left town at ninety miles an hour. Grandpaw said, "Quick, doc, pour some of that stuff on me. I've got to catch that mule before he runs clean out of the country." It was a long race but the mule finally gave it up and laid down exhausted. Grandpaw took a few swigs of his moonshine and carried the mule the rest of the way home.

The rest of the examples are from the “Down in Arkinsaw” articles. Another example of linking "that which is pragmatically possible and what is not" according to Preston concerns a stranger in hillbilly land:

She [a lady from California, seeking a place of retirement] told me about driving
along by a forty acre corn field and right in the middle of the field a man was sitting on a stump with a fishing pole, casting out into the corn patch. Going on a little farther, she saw an old man sitting out in front of his cabin. She asked him what in the world that fellow was doing, trying to fish in that corn field. The old man said, "Aw shucks, he's crazy as a bed bug. I'll get in the boat and go after him right now (Burns, June 1, 1967).

Preston includes use of double entendre in his cognitive-perceptual theory. The following is an example of this:

A tabloid newspaper had an article with this heading in big letters: Chase National Bank’s David Rockefeller and Win Rockefeller’s Millions." When Grandpaw saw it he got out his old suitcase and tied it together with binder twine. I said, "Where on earth are you going Grandpaw?" He said, I'm going to chase Rockefeller and win some of that money!" (Burns, Nov. 2, 1967).

The linguistic and semantic inappropriateness, which is also found as part of Preston's cognitive-perceptual theory, is found in this joke:

I saw a real hillbilly in the hospital elevator one day recently. He had brought his wife there for the birth of their baby. The nurse operating the elevator said, "What floor?" and he said, "'Ladies' ready-to-bear, please" (Burns, August 31, 1967).

Koestler's "bisociation theory" may include the following story with a more defined fit than the cognitive-perceptual theory that it is derived from. Koestler says that when there are two different frames of reference there can be a slippage between the contexts, thus causing humor.

Grandpaw got sick the other day and I had to take him to Doctor Boyer. The Doc
says to Grandpaw, "Did you ever have this before?" Grandpaw said, "Yes, I did."

"Well," says the Doc, "You've got it again!" (Burns, January 4, 1967).

Here is another example of the linking of what is pragmatically plausible and what is not from Preston's cognitive-perceptual theory:

I have just looked up an old picture of Grandpaw Snazzy and the girl he married. She was no beauty Queen, but as a matter of fact, Grandpaw doesn't look too impressive. But anyhow, he was courting this lady about the time the railroad came thru Fayetteville. When they got married Grandpaw decided it would be a fine honeymoon to ride the covered cars from Fayetteville to Ft. Smith. In Fayetteville they saw their first bananas and Grandpaw bought them one apiece to eat on the trip. Just before entering the tunnel at Winslow Grandpaw took a bite of his and then sudden darkness. He said to his wife, "Honey, don't eat that thing. I took one bite of mine and have gone blind as a bat" (Burns, c1967).

Another example of Preston's double entendre is found in this story:

Grandpaw sent off for a wild-west picture portraying horses and stage coach. When it came the stage coach was apparently just sitting in the air without any wheels on it, Grandpaw wrote that he wanted his money back. He asked, "What do you think holds it up?" The company wrote back just one word, "Outlaws" (Burns, Sept. 7, 1967).

The tall tales from wild and mountainous regions shared the exaggeration and distortion aspects of Preston's cognitive-perceptual theory with some of Burn's stories:

Thinking about Grandpaw reminds me that my Paw told me that one time he tried to wear a stiff collar and get citified. But Grandpaw would never cut his hair 'till
some dude hunter shot him for he thought Grandpaw was a bear. When we found his hide in the country store, we knew Grandpaw had gone to the golden shore. But St. Peter sent word "We ain't got no wings up here that will fit Grandpaw. Come at once and get him-take him back to Arkinsaw!" (Burns, September 7, 1967).

Here is another example of the hidden similarities between dissimilar things or ideas or situations from Preston's cognitive-perceptual theory:

Before my Grandpaw reached the end of his rope, he reached for an aspirin and got away." Amen, Brother (Burns, September 7, 1967).

And, finally, a true story that shows how all the hillbilly stories have a grain of truth in them. This is a possible tongue-in-cheek view of the misdirection from Preston's cognitive-perceptional theory:

I am indebted to my good friend & neighbor, Algie Green, for an Arkinsaw story that must be preserved for all posterity. Not only is it a true story but it tells how things used to be in this part of the country. It seems that a most unforgettable character, Uncle Ben Davis, went to spend the night with George Cox. Uncle Ben never took a bath and you could smell him a quarter of a mile. Therefore, George was not too elated to have him as an overnight guest. However, when bedtime came George brought out a tub and water and washed his feet and asked Uncle Ben if he would like to wash his feet also? Uncle Ben 'lowed he wouldn't bother but he said, "I'll throw out the water for you." "Wait, Uncle Ben," said George, I want to save that water to make coffee with for breakfast." "Oh," said Uncle Ben, "I hadn't thought of that. Well, that's OK. Let's go to bed" (Burns, May 18, 1967).
Burns then goes on with a short historical sketch of why people didn't bathe much back then. This was valuable—not only from a first person witness—but also because he said that he didn't blame them with conditions being as they were, and he listed all the conditions. Burns compassion and acceptance of people were based on the reasons people do the things they do. This compassionate understanding was one reason he was so beloved.

The Hillbilly jokes, listed singly, are not necessarily that funny. That important component of communication, the receiver, is part of the reason that the jokes are funny. Like the doctor who asked Burns, "Are you the Bob Burns that writes 'Down in Arkinsaw?' I always read and enjoy your article" (Burns, August 24, 1967). This column is written for literate people who have enough cash money to buy a weekly newspaper. It is written for people that can find humor in a little bit of ridicule aimed at themselves and their family and neighbors-like old cousin Annie over the mountain who smokes her corn cob pipe and still uses chicken fat to make cookies. The ridicule is acceptable because it is kindly and has a bit of truth in it. It binds people together—it does not push them apart into isolated bits of strangeness-instead they become part of an interesting heritage of understandable quaintness.

They are also funny for the same reason that a tiny bit of is so sweet when it tops the bitter old gingerbread made from sorghum. Most of the content of the articles deals with real and important issues facing our nation and church. News of real people in their community is welcome. Many wonderful historical memories are given. Then there are the Jokes. The hillbilly jokes are only a part of the many jokes told, but they have more value to their audience, because they deal with very real mores of their own past sub-
culture. Burns’ writing races from one topic to another, unexpectedly throwing in first this and then that, like being on a run away horse, or bareback on a Brahma Bull calf. This unexpected roller coaster of a read puts one in a state of readiness to be amused, for at any point a very funny joke or story can be lurking 'round the bend. Of the 226 columns reviewed for this paper from part of 1966 through part of 1971, there is a fairly consistent average of just a little over five jokes, funny stories, and tall tales per column. Sometimes one will fill half of the column.

Burns used humor of many different themes in his jokes, stories, and tall tales. Some of the themes most often used were political, church-related, hen-pecked husbands, women, children telling on parents, and blacks. The theme of Hillbillies has already been discussed.

It may be helpful for today’s reader to understand somewhat the background of the theme of Burns’ black humor. Burns claimed to be one of the few people still living in that area who actually had a black Mammy to care for him as a baby and small child. He also claimed that there was a group of black people living in cabins on a corner of his parent’s land when he was growing up, who were ex-slaves and their descendents. They had loved their master and had wanted to stay with him after they were freed, 28 years before Burns was born in 1893. Blacks were called colored people until the 1950s. Burns’ jokes and stories of blacks that he used in his column in the late 1960s and early 1970s reflect this earlier view. Burns had participated in the Vaudeville shows and minstrel shows early in the 1900s, where white men would black their faces and sing and tell jokes in the dialect of some of the blacks at that time. Vaudeville used Irish Immigrants and blacks consistently as the theme of their jokes. Dunne’s work also reflects a
vaudeville view of Irish dialect and humor.

Blacks, like hillbillies, were in the minority. Women were not a minority in numbers, but when Burns was born, they could not vote. They were expected to work in a small, but valued sphere—the women’s sphere. They were expected to stay in that sphere, with the exception of nursing and teaching. Like B’ere Rabbit, an oppressed group turns to wily ways, which is often reflected in humor. A great many of the jokes about women picture women in this old view—that women are not as smart or capable as men—and that they need to be taken care of. This view still prevailed somewhat in this country until the 1950s, although long before that time women began working as doctors, lawyers, and became politically active and visible.

It is possible that the hen-pecked husband in Burns’ jokes reflect the backlash from women who felt like they were considered only a belonging of their husbands.

Children do not have a vote, either, and were expected in Burns’ childhood to speak only when spoken to. Here is another area where in a later time the comments of children seem sometimes so unexpected and funny. In the mid 1950s Art Linkletter had a show in television showing children saying unexpected and funny things. A few of Burns’ jokes about children are credited to Linkletter.

Most of the church-related jokes were not spiritual. They were mostly poking fun at the way people thought about churches and how different church members and preachers fell short of the mark. There were many pointed jokes about tithing or offerings; however, and also many pointed jokes about denominational pride.

The political jokes and stories revealed Burns’ strong party ties. He was a staunch Democrat. Mrs. Burns was a staunch Republican, with a family member who had served
as a senator. For a long time in Arkansas, a poll tax was required to vote. It was said in
the family that the only time in their very long, blessedly happy marriage, that Mrs. Burns
was not at all pleased with her dear husband, was when he, in one election time,
deliberately did not pay her poll tax so that she could not vote!

These different themes were used in three important ways of reaching and
connecting with his readers. First, he shared the spotlight of being the local sage with
others. It helps the reader to understand the broad base of material supplied to him by
friends and neighbors, by shopkeepers, and even strangers who read his columns, when
one considers his life. Burns was born and raised in those hills, and came back to his own
land when on vacation from his various churches around the country and for his so called
retirement. He, like Will Rogers, never knew a stranger. Most of the people in that area
were actually kinfolk. He was always going out and among people—going for a
newspaper, a soda pop, a haircut, to call on one of his parishioners, and these errands
always took quite a while, because he was delighted to see all the different people that he
saw—and delighted to give them credit for any story or joke that they shared with him.

Second, he used material things, happenings and people of the community
familiar to his readers in his jokes and stories. He would sometimes actually tease
someone without mercy in a joke, as with his well-respected doctor and beloved friend,
Dr. Boyer.

Third, he took incidents that really happened to himself, his family and friends,
and used a grain of that truth, with a twist, to show the funny side of it.

Both Dunne and Burns lived at times in or near Chicago. Dunne was born there.
Chicago was a different place entirely than the beautiful rustic Arkansas where Burns
was born, but it had its own beauty. Chicago is filled with tiny shops, many of them run
by people of old world origin. Immigrants of the 19th century settled in groups in various
areas of Chicago. Old world village life centered on the pub, where one could eat,
socialize, or nurse a beer for hours (or get drunk). It was a place that the whole family
was welcome. It was a focal point of society. In America bars replaced the pubs. Dunne
cast the character of Mr. Dooley as a bartender. This was an important person in those
communities. The bartender was aware of what was going on, and shared this knowledge,
with appropriate comments on the fitness of things. The bartender was, however, just one
of them. But he knew the grass roots version -the pulse of the people--of what was going
on in their world.

Dunne says this about Dooley in his preface to the 1898 book, *Mr. Dooley in Peace
and in War*, a collection of some of the Mr. Dooley stories published in his newspaper
columns:

> Archey Road stretches back for many miles from the heart of an ugly
city to the cabbage gardens that gave the maker of the seal his opportunity to call
the city "urbs in horto." Somewhere between the two-that is to say, forninst th'
gas-house and beyant Healey's slough and not far from the polis station-lives
Martin Dooley, doctor of philosophy. . . .In this community you can hear all the
various accents of Ireland. . . .Among them lives and prospers the traveler,
archaeologist, historian, social observer, saloon-keeper, economist, and
philosopher, [Mr. Dooley] who has not been out of the ward for twenty-five years
"but twict." He reads the newspapers with solemn care, heartily hates them, and
accepts all they print for the sake of drowning Hennessy's rising protests against
his logic. . . .His impressions are transferred to the desensitized plate of Mr. Hennessy's mind, where they can do know harm (Dunne, 1898, pp vii-ix).

Mr. Dooley has this comment to make about the people in his community:

A simple people! "Simple, says ye!" remarked Mr. Dooley. "Simple like th' air or th' deep sea. Not complicated like a watch that stops whin th' shoot iv clothes ye got it with wears out. Whin Father Butler wr-rote a book he niver finished, he said simplicity was not wearin' all ye had on ye'er shirt-front, like a tin-horn gambler with his di'mon' stud. An' 'tis so" (Dunne, 1898, pix).

The Dooley articles, taken as a whole, were not simple. Any ethnographer would be delighted to have access into such a glimpse of the life of an area of a city, covering infinite happenings and opinions of not only local, but also national and international concerns. One notices that some of the 28 Dooley quotes found in Bartlett's' Famous Quotations are marked off in penciled parenthesis in the over one-hundred-year-old fragile books of some of the collected Mr. Dooley articles by Dunne. Without the rest of the sketch, the quotations lose their tremendous impact. The real value of these columns are that they appeared daily, with infinite variety, placing the reader in a different world, and showing opinions of happenings from a different perspective, a perspective that did not hesitate in calling a spade a spade.

Dunne's sketches are roughly six pages in length. Five of his books, not counting the one restricted to law, which may have repeats, have over 200 sketches. It is beyond the scope of this paper to do a comprehensive analysis of his work. My favorites have to do with humor apparent in human nature, such as the article entitled, "The Divided Skirt," where a young girl is given a bicycle. All goes well until she comes home wearing pants,
which is unheard of at that time! Both the father and the parish priest are present when she wheels in:

Whin along come th' poor foolish girl with all th' kids in Bridgeport afther her.

Donahue turned white. 'Say a pather an' avy quick,' he says to the priest. Thin he called out to his wife. 'Honoria,' he says, 'bring a bar'l,' he says. 'Molly has come away without anything on,' he says, 'but Sarsfield's pa-ants.' Thin he turned on his daughter. 'May th' Lord forgive ye, Molly Donahue,' he says, 'this night!' he says. 'Child, where is ye'er dhress?' "Tut, tut!' says the good man.

"Molly,' he says, 'ye look well on that there bicycle,' he says. 'But 'tis th' first time I ever knowed ye was bow-legged,' he says, says the soggarth aroon. "Well, sir, she wint into th' house as if she'd been shot fr'm a gun, an' th' nex' momin' I see Doheny's express wagon haulin' th' bicycle away' (Dunne, 1898, 1899, pp. 156,157).

This may be an example of the theory taken from the cognitive-perceptual theory, and Koestler's biosociation theory, because there is a slippage between the frame of reference of the father and what one would have expected from a priest. Another example of this theory may be seen in the quip at the end of an article on higher education: “D'ye think th' collidges has much to do with th' progress iv th' wurruld?” asked Mr. Hennessy. “D'ye think,” said Mr. Dooley, “t's th' mill that makes the wather run?” (Dunne, 1901, p.204).

This quip is an example of how a thought taken out of context does not do justice to the original meaning. Dunn hated a lot of pomp-he wrote this article after a bicentennial celebration of an ivy league university that he felt made rather big claims of how they, and they alone, had caused big changes in this country. Dunne did not have the formal
educational advantages of Burns, but Dunne was very bright, street smart, and worked very hard. He had a daily syndicated newspaper column. He was well respected by the public and his peers. There are at least sixteen books still in libraries of and about his work, although in Dunne's piece. "On Books," Mr. Dooley says;

'Tis all wrong,' said Mr. Dooley. 'They're on'y three books in the wurruld worth readin', – Shakespeare, th' Bible, an' Mike Aheam's histhry iv Chicago. I have Shakespeare on thrust, Father Kelly r-reads th' Bible f'r me, an' I didn't buy Mike Aheam's histhry because I seen more thin he cud put into it. . . I had it out with Father Kelly th" other day in this very matther. He was coming up ft'm town with an ar-rmful iv books f'r prizes at th' school. . . . 'Have ye th' Lives iv th' Saints, or the Christyan Dooty, or th' Story iv Saint Rose iv Lima?' I says. 'I have not,' says he. 'I have some good storybooks. I'd rather th' kids'd r-read Char-les Dickens than any iv th' tales iv them holy men that was burned in ile or et up be lines,' he says. "It does no good in these degin'rate days to prove that th' best that can come to a man fr behavin' himself is to be cooked in a pot or di-gested be a line,' he says (Dunne, 1998, pp.106-108).

Here the slippage of Koestler's biosociation theory seems to be the surprise that anyone, even Mr. Dooley, would put down the reading of books, and then argue with the priest later on the side of religious books over secular books. Another example of this theory is the outrageous viewpoint of Dooley in the piece "On the Indian War":

You an' me, Hinnissy, is th' white civilization. I come along, an' I find 01' Snake in-his-Gaiters livin' quite an' dacint in a new frame house. Thinks I, 'Tis a shame fr to lav this savage man in session iv this fine abode, an' him not able to vote
an' without a mend on th' polis force.' So says 1: "Snakes,' I says, 'get along,' says 1. 'I want ye'er house, an ye best move out west iv th' thracks, an dig a hole fr ye'ersilf,' I says. . . (Dunne, 1898, pp. 245-2460).

Oh my, one says, how could anyone actually say these think and say these things? This is the slippage of Koestler's biosociation theory, because obviously people did, even if they didn't admit it to themselves and that of course is exactly what Dunne was pointing out. Since it was put in such a humorous way, it was read. His writings on the Spanish-American War stirred up and reflected public sentiment and helped make him popular across the country. Dunne, through Dooley, blasted every conceivable topic. He was pointing out truth, but in a very funny way. He was very specific in the events and people he had Mr. Dooley discuss – a mirror of the world around him. His influence waned after the Irish immigrants became assimilated into the American culture. Burns, on the other hand, was still going strong at the time of his death in 1975. Both men had quite a network of jolly friends, and were very much in the know of current affairs. Dunne was 25 years older than Burns. Dunne's Mr. Dooley columns started the year Burns was born – 1893.

Chicago had a major influence on both humorists. Each large city has its own essence – but each large city also has a totally different life for its inhabitants-almost another world-then the life found in a small town or city or farm. There are people in large cities who are born, live, and die within the city limits, just as there are people who are born, live, and die within the limits of their mountain valley. This isolation has helped to preserve the dialects, just as the isolation of Ireland and Scotland helped preserve the Gaelic dialects in the first place. There are other people who travel widely and who live
elsewhere, but who clearly have a preference for one way of life or the other, such as Burns when he wrote of Arkansas: "You ain't in heaven but you're on its way" (See A-2), and Dunne, when he had Mr. Dooley say in his piece, "The City as a Summer Resort":

"I must go back," I says, "to th'city," I says, "where there is nuthin' to eat but what ye want an' nuthin' to drink but what ye can buy," I says. "Where the dust is laid be th' sprinklin' cart, where th' ice-man comes reg-lar an' th' roof-garden is in bloom an' ye're waked not be th' sun but be th' milkman," I says. "I want to be near a doctor whin I'm sick an' near eatable food whin I'm hungry, an' where I can put out me hand early in th' mornin' an' hook in a newspaper," says I. "Th' city," says I, "is th' on'y summer resort f'r a man that has iver lived in th' city," I says. . . . 'We ought to live where all th' good things iv life comes ft'm." says Hogan [Dooley's sidekick and foil]. "No," says I, "Th' place to live is where all th' good things in life goes to. . . .Th' cream comes in an' th' skim-milk stays" (Furnas, p. 572).

Burns and Dunne are alike in that they both share in helping to produce part of what make ethnic humor so valuable-humor that helps a person identify with a facet of what makes each of us unique-at the same time lets us laugh at ourselves-and so grow. They have, however, different reasons for using ethnic humor. The following is from a "Down in Arkinsaw" column: "I hope I can make somebody laugh their cares away and I'll do my best first, last and always" (Burns, August 31, 1967). This concept falls into the psychoanalytic and related "release" theories that argue: "All people operate under constraints to think, speak, and act in certain ways," and, "Laughter provides relief from mental, nervous and/or psychic energy and thus ensures homeostasis after a struggle,
tension, strain, etc."(Preston, 1997, p. 474). These theories are also apparent as Burns explains further in another article:

"There should be tellers of funny stories to visit the sick for a good story is the elixir of life"(Christian Morganstern). My mission is also the healing and restorative therapy of seeing the funny side of life and sometimes ridicule will arouse us to see ourselves as God sees us (Burns, August 24, 1967).

Dunne, on the other hand, saw other advantages to the use of ethnic humor: "It occurred to me that while it might be dangerous to call an alderman a thief in English no one could sue if a comic Irishman denounced the statesman as a thief' (Demuth, p.30). Dunne was also trying to sell newspapers, as evidenced in his piece, "Newspaper Publicity," when Dooley says:

'They'll get you after awhile, Hinnissy. They'll print ye'er pitcher. But on'y wanst. A newspaper is to intertain, not to teach a moral lesson.' , D'y'ye think people likes th' newspapers iv th' prisint time?' asked Mr. Hennessy. ' D'y'ye think they're printed f'r fun?' said Mr. Dooley (Dunne, 1906, p.244).

Then again Dunne used his work to make people more satisfied with their lot in life as shown in his article "The City as a Summer Resort," where Dooley tells of the irritants and shortcomings of the country and tells Hennessy about a plan to bring the country people in to his area for a short vacation:

'Im glad to hear ye say that,' said Mr. Hennessy. 'I wanted to go out to th' counthry but I can't unless I sthrike.' 'That's why I said it,' replied Mr. Dooley (Dunne, 1901, p.51)."
Actually, trying to compare the Mr. Dooley pieces and the ethnic jokes of Burns is a little like trying to compare apples and oranges. It is, however, possible to compare the two literary journalists and their work. My new summer sandals have straps across the top of the shoes. They are striped with small lines of different colors. From a distance, the colors blend—a rainbow effect—and one sees the proper current colors to match this season's clothes. There is an overall blending of jokes, funny stories, and serious messages in Burn's articles, so that there is a comparison possible between the two literary journalist's work. Burns' jokes were not all ethnic, and the comments on human nature and society were not always found in jokes. Dunne, on the other hand, had Mr. Dooley present the topics of the day in lively, funny sketches.

Both men spoke against the Republican Party. Burns had this joke in a "Down in Arkinsaw" article:

Last week I referred to the scarcity of Republicans in the early days of Arkinsaw history. I remember that following a Confederate picnic, there was a J.P. court session in the old blacksmith shop, involving a charge of defamation of character. A lawyer asked a witness: 'Did you hear my client use the words: You are just a d---- Republican?' 'Yes, Sir, I heard him say it.' 'But how do you know he referred to Mr. Jones?' 'Because Mr. Jones was the only d--- Republican at the picnic!' (Burns, Nov. 2, 1967).

Dunne had Dooley and Hinnessy discuss reformers in this piece:
'I don't like a rayformer,' said Mr. Hennessy. 'Or any other raypublican,' said Mr. Dooley (Dunne, 1902, p. 172).
One of the main similarities between Burns and Dunne stems from their underlying heritage of Irish and Scottish ancestors. The whole culture of Gaelic peoples goes back thousands of years, and while dividing into the separate areas of Breton, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, there is still a marked outlook that differs from other cultural mores. It is not by accident that there are stereotypes of the fighting Irish cops and the Scottish fighting tartanned clans. Fighting is the key word here, as in much of the world's mountainous, remote peoples. They have to be tough, for they learn early to fight for survival. Even though Burns came from landed people with educational advantages, and Dunne was a second-generation poor Irish immigrant, they retained this fighting, up-and-at 'em spirit. Dunne has Dooley show evidence of this fight in many ways, one example of an early local article has political candidates being discussed:

"But will he make a good fight?" says th' man. "Will he?" says Hinnissy. "Will he make a good fight?" he says. 'Dooley,' he says, 'this here Dimmymrat wants to know if Bill 'll make a good fight, Why,' he says, 'if th' opprisors iv th' people goes again him, give him Jackson Park or a clothes closet, gun or soord, ice-pick, or billyard cue, chair or stove leg, an' Bill 'll make him climb a tree,' he says.

(Dunne, 1898, pp.103, 104).

Burns, like Dunne, believed in fighting evil, as in this article from "Down in Arkinsaw":

God has told them [the angels] not to do our homework for us. He wants us to fight a good fight and overcome evil, that we may attain unto the fullness of the stature of the Lord Jesus Christ (Burns, December 21, 1967).
Issues in church and state were the main arenas for fighting for Burns. He often fought against the evil of loving and holding on to our money, using both a straight and a humorous approach as in the following article from "Down in Arkansaw":

"You are a pillar in the church but you are also a robber. The Bible says, Will a man rob God in tithes and offerings? When you sell a cow for $100 do you give God His part of $10 and then make an offering out of your part? Is our Christian stewardship like an income tax return-when we make all the deductions there's little left to render unto God? The sad thing is that most preachers, including the writer, rob God, and if the blind lead the blind, we'll all land in the ditch! (Burns, June 1, 1967).

This joke in the same article restates the point:

A man died and went up to the pearly gates and wanted to get in. Saint Peter said, “What have you been doing to gain entry?” The man said, “Why last Sunday I put 15 cents in the collection plate.” Saint Peter called an aide and said, “Give this man back his 15 cents and tell him to go to h-!!!”

Burns believed in unity against the foe-whether that foe was a divided church, or a civil anarchy---as shown in the following articles from "Down in Arkinsaw":

The widely divided Protestants with emphasis on denomination, creed, modes and methods have had their day and are on their way out. The gulf between the two Christian churches (Protestant and Roman Catholic) must be bridged and a unified body of God's people face the world with a new spirit and witness, lest we all perish from the earth (Burns, July 1967).

A bit of humor in the same article emphasizes this point:
The Walnut Grove church rented the manse recently to a delightful and lovely family from California. We cordially invited them to come right over to the church and worship with us. "But," they said, "We are Baptists." "Well," we said, "That is very unusual. You hardly ever run into any Baptists. But come on over anyway. We're just as much Baptist as Presbyterian and you can feel at ease with us. As a matter of fact, you don't have to have too much religion." "But," they said, "We understand the Presbyterians are all hypocrites." "Well," we said, "Just come right on. There's always room for a few more!"

Both Burns and Dunne had quite a bit to say about war. Dunne made fun of the activities of war in articles like “War and War makers”:

“We bate thim,” he says “we bate thim be thirty miles,” he says. “That’s where we’re sthrong, Hinnissy. We may get licked on th' battle field, we may be climbin' threes in th' Ph'lipeens with arrows stickin' in us like quills, as Hogan says, into th' ftetful porcupine or we may be doin' a mile in five munyits flat down th' pike [pursued by the enemy] . . .but in th' pages iv histhry that our children read we niver turned back on e'er an inimy. We make our own glorious pages on th' battlefield, in th' camp an' in th' cab'net meetin” (Dunne, 1906, p.45).

Burns, on the other hand, wrote in reply to an appeal given in a conference that was sponsored by the National Council of Churches for all denominations to give sanctuary and comfort to draft dodgers, incite violence and riots against social injustices, and to promote a nationwide strike in opposition to war in Viet Nam:

Freedom is not free but the most costly blessing we enjoy. History's road to freedom is marked by the blood, sweat and tears of men and women who gave the
last full measure of their devotion. Liberty is not license (Burns, Nov. 16, 1967).

In the same article Burns explains further:

The terrible evil of communism has infiltrated and seeped into our land with its destructive ideology and tactics. Dissenters, demonstrators, Hippies, and what have you are dupes of the Marxist doctrine of revolting against the existing social, political and moral order.

He goes on to tell about the little boy in the hills that shouted to the hills "I'll fight you," and heard the echo, then yelled "I like you," and heard that echo.

The main difference that I see between Burns and Dunne is their underlying mood. Burns seems to be optimistic, even when pointing out errors, and works towards a better solution, such as the quip at the end of a "Down in Arkinsaw": “Why don't you be happy and healthy? 'It's the surly bird that catches the germ" (Burns, n.d.), while Dunne seems to be rather pessimistic and cynical and only comments on things that are wrong, such as in this quote: "Thrust ivrybody, but cut th' ca-ards” (Bartlett, 1992, p 602). Both approaches can have a beneficial result, however, as they both help us "to see oursel's as ither's see us" as in the old poem of the old Scottish Bard, Robert Burns.

I once worked for a family that put only three candles on birthday cakes- one for the past, one for the present, and one for the future. Burns wrote about the past--historical incidents and times; the present--current happenings in church and state; and the future-events that needed to happen in the church. An example of a true happening in the past that he reported in his column, for a reason, follows:

My Uncle Jim married my Aunt Sophia, and the only honeymoon they had was
trying to fix up an old log house in the middle of a cotton field. They had to carry water from a well across the field and up a ways on the hillside. They had an old wagon and team and a few belongings--no conveniences or luxuries--not even necessities. The only way they could make a dime was to rent the land and raise a cotton crop. When drought or high water ruined the crop, they really suffered. This all started in the late 1880's on Lee’s Creek, north of Van Buren, and I have never been able to understand how they had the courage and fortitude to endure their hardships and bear the burden of troubles that constantly beset them. Then came the children until there were eight more to clothe and feed. Uncle Jim worked day in and day out from daylight until dark, but I never heard him complain. Then one night a waterspout brought a wall of water down the narrow valley. They awakened as the old log house began to disintegrate. They made their way up a makeshift ladder to the attic where the branches of a large tree touched the house. Uncle Jim got the children in the tree and just as he lifted Aunt Sophia to safety, the old house was swept away with all they possessed in it. They had to remain in the tree for several hours until the water receded and they could reach higher ground. There was no Red Cross, no State or Federal aid. The neighbors did what they could but they had little to do with. But Uncle Jim and Aunt Sophia started all over again and raised their family. When there was nothing but some cornpone, beans and a little fatback, there were always words of grace and thanksgiving for the blessings they did enjoy. And yet, so many people today complain and protest. They think somebody ought to give them something. Amen, Brother (Burns, June 13, 1968).
The points of being grateful for what one has, to do the best one can with what one has, and "to cut the pattern according to the cloth" - this theme of self-reliance without whining was often seen in Burns' work. He wrote mainly about what was happening currently. He not only shared about events, however, but how one could (and should) be happy in whatever circumstances presented themselves, as this portion from an article from his column shows.

You cannot buy it [happiness] and the quicker we disassociate happiness with material things the quicker we shall possess this god-given gift. You can't bring happiness into your home unless you are happy yourself. You can't diffuse, radiate or share something you don't have, so, think about happy things, do happy things and the first thing you know you'll be singing even in the bathtub. Happiness is very contagious and it will soon permeate every crack and crevice in your home and bring the joy of heaven to earth come down into the lives of every member of the household (Burns, March 9, 1967).

The source of this happiness was to be spiritual, as Burns went on in the same article to give this story as an example:

One day in the deep South an old Negro Mammy was sitting on her porch rocking, singing and praising the Lord. Soon, a crowd gathered 'round her and began to clap their hands and sing. Finally, someone said, "Mammy, what on earth has come on you." "I jest don't know for sure, dear friends. I guess my battery is overcharged."

Burns wrote about things that he thought would come to pass or should come to pass as in this portion of an article from his column:
The widely divided Protestants with emphasis on denomination, creed, modes and methods have had their day and are on their way out. The gulf between the two Christian churches (Protestant and Roman Catholic) must be bridged and a unified body of Christ's people [must] face the world with a new spirit and witness, lest we all perish from the earth. Recently, in Portland, Oregon, a Protestant convention advocated a union with the older Roman Catholic as dominant in a new universal, ecumenical Catholic Church. This is what religion is thinking about in 1967 (Burns, 1967).

Burns was ahead of his time, for he was advocating a dissolving of denominational boundaries, which is now come to pass in the nondenominational churches of our day. In many ways Burns and Dunne had a real different outlook on things. Burns had his eye on the "tickle," while Dunne had his eye on the "tiller." Dunne's mother probably did not have a beautiful cherry bedroom suite, nor beautiful china with a gold leaf on the back. Burns had a broader and deeper vision, but Dunne did extremely well in his area of journalism. In contrast to Burns, Dunne stayed in the present and addressed a wide range of problems and happenings, but almost always holding them up for ridicule.
Both Dunne and Burns had their fingers on the pulse of this nation. They both kept up with the news from many sources. They both used humorous dialect. Why was being a humorist important in their lives? Both are remembered as humorists by the editors of their columns and their readers, and their humor has had a lasting impact on many more people (and generations) than their regular work alone would have done.

So why did they choose to write in dialect in the first place? Burns wanted to make people forget their cares, to help in the "healing and restorative therapy of seeing the funny side of life" (Burns, Aug. 24, 1967). To do so, he teased and ridiculed them, usually with a gentle touch, to help them see themselves as they really are. Dunne did not want to be sued for libel, he wanted to sell newspapers, and he used the opinions of Dooley to help make people more satisfied with their lot in life by a "sour grapes" technique.

What effects did the humor of these writers have on their readers? One important effect of both Burns' and Dunne's humor is that it enabled readers to identify and accept (the first step in change for the better) the things that needed to be changed in their lives—both attitudes and actions—painlessly. The humor allowed the readers to remember and pass on this important tool for helping to rid a culture of sham, hypocrisy, and narrow vision. Their work enabled their readers to laugh and their cares were lightened and their
health improved. Dunne helped people be aware of the problems of immigration and the impact it had on our cities at the turn of the 20th century. He also mirrored the public feeling during the Spanish-American War, according to Kirsten (p. 104), and he became a "very shrewd observer and commentator on American politics"(pp. 101-102). There were both teaching and preaching contained in the funny stories and jokes of both literary journalists, therefore their work has lasted.

Was the work of Burns influenced by Dunne? Kirsten reported, "As Dunne's columns were syndicated, his protagonist's voice reached readers across the entire United States"(pp. 101-102). And Furnas wrote, "there were admirers of Dooley for thirty years after the work appeared in 1893... [his columns] were nationally syndicated and bound into books for your grandfather's age"( p. 570). Since Burns was born in 1893, was well educated, and had a newspaper and tobacco store early in his life, he undoubtedly read and was influenced by Dunne's work. Burns' nickname was actually Dooley. Both men were champions of the underprivileged.

It is both a strength and weakness of this thesis that Burns is my grandfather. When my father was called to World War II, I was three months old. My mother and I joined her parents and her grandmother at the top of a mountain north of Albuquerque, New Mexico, where my grandparents served a missionaries to the Native Americans and other people in that thinly populated area. After a while we moved down close to Galveston, Texas, and were there three and a half years later, when my father returned from the war and my parents and I moved to Oklahoma. We then visited them often, even when they lived far away. I knew my grandfather well, and he poured out his thoughts and joys and instruction for me in continual letters and packages by mail, till the time of his death.
Memory and impressions can be faulty, however, especially when influenced by strong emotion. It has been difficult to maintain the degree of detachment and objectivity appropriate for a paper such as this. However, I probably know him and his work better than anyone now living.

When I first started this thesis, I did not have a large set of Burns’ columns to work from. Then, I was able to acquire more copies via interlibrary loan. Hopefully I will be able to travel to Arkansas and obtain copies of all of his work before I continue writing of his life and work. I will also do more tracking down of actual events, times, and honors, such as when he presided over Presbytery in New Mexico, and what views were expressed there and in sermons. I know there were cousins who kept scrapbooks of his work. It would have been a help to have access to them. I would have preferred working directly from the newspapers, not just the clippings, of both Burns and Dunne, so that I could have seen what news was then being published, and what others were saying about it. It would also been helpful to have more preserved letters to and from others.

It is a strength that I feel so very strongly that both the work of Burns and Dunne is important and lasting, not only for a historical viewpoint and record, but also as a learning tool to be used in impacting others with the important concepts and mores of today.

Research into the work of two other literary journalists of roughly that time who used the genre of ethnic newspaper columns and who were also champions of the oppressed and underprivileged, Langston Hughes and Alexander Posy, would expand this study in future research. Lowe said that these two literary journalists, along with Dunne, used this genre "to great advantage, mounting savage attacks on the central government and the
excesses of mainstream capitalist society in a curiously disarming manner” (p. 210). It would be interesting to compare the difference of these columns concerning the challenges of the Afro-American, Native American and descendents of European immigrant peoples in our culture at that time. It would also be interesting to research the differences between the Irish and Scottish dialects, cultures, and mores. Another area of interest would be other undiscovered writers who exist not only in print, but in the memories of their readers, friends, and relatives.

In summary, the work of both Burns and Dunne was well received and had a lasting impact on the readers. Burns used ethnic humor in jokes and stories of Hillbillies in his newspaper columns, and Dunne used ethnic humor in the opinions of his Irish bartending character, Mr. Dooley of Chicago. They were both remembered as humorists, even though Burns was a Presbyterian Minister, and Dunne was a journalist and an editor. They both commented on current issues of local and national importance, while Burns also commented on church affairs. Burns was born in 1893, the year Dunne started his Dooley articles. Burns was nicknamed Dooley. Humor enabled the readers to accept themselves as they really were, and to laugh at themselves, and have the opportunity to change. It helped people forget their woes-or at least to give them a different perspective. Humor kept Dunne from being sued for libel, sold newspapers for both writers, and helped in healing the sick. Both men were out among their people-they had the pulse of their times and reported it. Neither writer failed to call a spade a spade. They both caught how real people lived and talked and thought and spoke-and made it memorable. Burns was an optimist, while Dunne tended to be cynical and fatalistic, but much can be learned from either view. Burns had a deep spirituality and, like Dunne, hated sham and
hypocrisy.

In conclusion, we could well profit by studying humorists such as Burns and Dunne; to enable us to see ourselves as others see us, to learn the tools that would help us let others see themselves as others see them, to take historical events and social issues and speak effectively about them, and to use effectively that pen which is “mightier than a sword.” Humor is a powerful force that can unlock many doors for us. It goes beyond words and cuts across cultural boundaries. It is a healing and sustaining force. It is fun.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX
APPENDIX

Bob Burns Primary Documents

1. “Cover of “Oh Arkansas!”
2. “Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 1-4
3. “Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 1-4
4. “Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 1-4
5. “Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 5-9 and “A Special Chorus”
6. “A Night on Broadway”
7. “News From Clyde”
8. “News From Clyde”
9. “Burns, Bums and Bunko”
10. “Did you hear . . . ”
Appendix

"Cover of "Oh Arkansas!"

OH ARKANSAS!

Words and Music by
BOB BURNS
Benton Polo Ridge, Ark.

Published By
GUISSINGER'S MUSIC HOUSE
Everything in Music
Established 1905
FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS
Appendix

“Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 1-4

Oh, Arkansas!

Words & music by Bob Burns

1. When you go down South in the U.S.A.
   You
   Well, say I'd told you that not since he died
   To
   She

2. Some folks row their boat back to Daniel Boone
   But
   And they call it... day.

3. We went out one night, Mary and Paw and Bob
   A
   Well, the prettiest girl in the world today
   Is a

4. On the way our dog ran off and got entangled
   But old Chief
   Our way down there had to have more room. So we went
   Her

HOG CALLIN' GAL FROM THE U. OF A. You see her

West, they are quick on the draw But you have to grow what you toss

last back to the bawl and Bob But since we look so small

stayed. But was eating so fast But she said, "Will you have some"
Appendix

“Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 1-4

Oh, Arkansas!

in the state of Arkansas, Well, a St. Louis man read the log book: it was a bear. I remember when Grandpaw
Well, we wish we never had. One day in St. Louis, and for
And I'll swear he passed his glass. There is but mean down acry

HAS BEEN RAISED ON TUR-NIE GREENS, WE'VE A FEATHER STUCK RIGHT UP.

Slow Train back. Then he made the trip, just to take a look. The dry pecked, Chick-a-bom, and hush ass glad in his hewed. It's better of wise, Bob said. Hid'd my hat, I've got to move. The right and day. Makes you eat a swallow, but it sure don't lay. The

IN OUR CAP, FOR THIS DEAR OLD GIRL, HAS JUST PUT US ON THE MAP. THE

had a fly when they showed him Grandpaw. He thought Rip was to sail for he never was found. Came the circus still brown jug like to have mint Grandpaw. His home

RA-ZAR BACKLOGS ARE JUST ALL EXOTIC AND JAW BUT OUR HOME.

CHORUS

Van Winke had woke up in Arkansas. Oh, Arkansas, where
took him off one day they thought he was a clown. Oh, Arkansas, where
hard to reckon in the State of Arkansas. Oh, Arkansas, I've got
made jet liner bit a tree in Arkansas. Oh, Arkansas, where

GROWN WHIPPED TAK'T THE CAKE IN AR-KANSAS, OH, AR-KANSAS, WERE_
Appendix

“Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 1-4

Oh, Arkansas!

So proud we could bust! Oh, Arkansas, you've been praised

no place like home. And when you see the Turkey

we'll in the lot rolls. You sing Salley Gordin and then you

wear every door. The Arkansas Club will show you

get in your foot. Just take one song of old corn

AND YOU'VE BEEN CURSED, BUT NOW'S THE TIME TO PUT SHOES ON

in the street. I know you'll never see nothing in the world like

old Grannaw (Coleman's chorsos) and join the celebra

lightning in the State of

Arkansas

AR-KANSAS
Appendix

“Oh, Arkansas!” Verses 5-9 and
“A Special Chorus”

Verse 5
A trouser broke down and was lookin’ for aid
A man with 20 hells sat in the shade
A musket wrench was what he ask’d a-bout
But the man got so ang’ry that he how’d the trous-
ter out
This ain’t no monkey antics I am proud to say
I’m just baby-sittin’ while my wife’s away
The trouser-sat, if they all call you Paw
Then God help me Mister I must be in Arkansas
Chorus:
Oh Arkansas Where a Preacher on a log
Oh Arkansas And he gun right at a hog
He pull’d the trig’l’ in’ I’ll win, lose or draw
But that Preacher’s still a run-in’
From a hog in Arkansas

Verse 6
Grand Paw was so proud of his ped-i-gree
He sent off moccies for his family tree
It was too bad when it came in the mail
His very first on-cas-ter was a hang-ing by his tail
Grand Paw blew his top Said, it just ain’t so
Told Mister Dorr-din-right where he could go
But he got on after he made a check
He said, I will con less
Some of them hung by their neck
Chorus:
Oh Arkansas Where we just sit and rest
Oh Arkansas Tis the place that I love best
The good book says, I favor your Maw and Paw
Took in, how’s goin’ to catch a ten
They get wild in Arkansas

Verse 7
Grand Paw had a mule that could bray so loud
When they went to town it would draw a crowd
Well, a stranger said, that the old He Lamon Sounded like a poli-ti-cian Blowin’ off in Arken-saw
But the funniest thing was a list’rap shot
Grand Paw and his mule down in the low’s lot
When Grand Maw said, that they both look’d like a Paw
The family was em-barrassed in the State of Arken-saw
Chorus:
Oh Arkansas Where the pig-tus’ was took
Oh Arkansas Maw and mule with ham-yard look
We had it o’er but it’s hard on Grand Paw
Keeps ever body guessin’
Which one’s which in Arkansas

Verse 8
Grand Paw had a farm on the hill-side
Where the corn he raised was his joy and pride
It was the kind that made you cut a rug
He didn’t have it in his crib
But he had it in a jug
A leddy from town Said, I just can’t see
Why you country gits Ar’ all six feet three
Grand Paw said, Ma’am in the Hill Old Le song
The reason we’re so tall
Is that we stay green so long
Chorus:
Oh Arkansas When you leave you’ll come back
Oh Arkansas To live in your cob-in-shack
There’s just one thing that sticks down in your craw
Some folks laugh when you tell ’em
That you come from Arkansas

Verse 9
When a Grand Paw died it was quite a shame
Ever body that he’d go down below
When the Preacher said, Let’s pray round the bier
A voice said in the Coff-in, Don’t forget that I’m in here
Well, the place he went he got him in a row
In the well-conic I seen somethin’ he knew
He got up mad, I was my reach or its law
He said, This ain’t another I’m going back to
Arkansas
Chorus:
Oh Arkansas Where we eat Powsurm steaks
Oh Arkansas Wish it down with moun-tain dew
The Gunner said, We’re goin’ to pass a law
To civilize the old stump-jumpers
In the State of Arkansas

A SPECIAL CHORUS DEDICATED TO
COACH FRANK BROYLES

OH AR-KAN-SAS WHERE WE ALL DANCE THE JIG
OH AR-KAN-SAS WHERE THE ROCKS ARE LITTLE
AND BIG
WE’RE ROOTIN’ RAZORBACKS
AND WE’RE FULL OF HU-RAH!
WHEN YOU HEAR THE JIG SOO-EE
WHOOP IT UP FOR AR-KAN-SAS.
Appendix

“A Night on Broadway”

The Combined Combination of Comic Comedians
Presents for Your Approval
The Colossal Classical Musical Comedy

A Night on Broadway

INTRODUCTION
They Go Wild, Simply Wild, Over Me
I Will Say She Does
Can You Take Wild Wimmen?
How You Gonna Keep ’Em Down on the Farm
Nicodemus Snowball, Aberham Linkum Johnson
Queen Victory
Hiram Birdseed

PROGRAM

Hey, Rubel

Burns

Introducing Rock-A Bye-My Baby

Mammy O’Mine

Tenor Solo

Luginbuel

Love and Lather

Vaudeville

Company

MUSIC AND SPECIALTIES

Robert: Louis Burns, impersonating Sir
Harry Lauder, the World’s Greatest
Comedian, in his interpretations of “I
Love A Lassie,” “She’s the Lass for
Me,” “Roaming in the Gleaners.”

MUSIC AND SPECIALTIES

Reid Luginbuel: O, What A Pal Was Mary

Grand finale

Somebody’s Done Me Wrong

Dutch Mills

Clyde, Saturday Night, February 14, 1920

Evansville,

Cane Hill,

ADMISSION 15 AND 25 CENTS
Appendix

“News from Clyde”

NEWS FROM CLYDE
By Bob Burns, Poet, Prophet and Distinguished Gentleman

In 205 B.C. the Romans passed a law banning women chariot drivers. Since 51% of automotive
our nation’s drivers are women the way to save fuel is to pass a law banning
the said women drivers. Besides fuel conservation, we want the women to stay healthy
and if they keep driving they’re liable to take a turn for the worse.

In Walnut Grove
I was talking to a woman on the street in Prairie Grove about the proposed law and she said
that statistics prove women drivers are safer than men. I said the explanation
is that everything gets out of your way except telephone poles and garage doors.
She began to get mad and I said, “Well, I am willing to give you half of the road when I
can figure out which half you want?” By that time she was real mad and she said,
“Brother, we won’t have to worry about a gas shortage as long as you stick
line around hearing you preach, if we could connect a hot air pipe to your
big mouth

and if there was some way we could connect a pipe line with
your hot air we could heat up Walnut Grove Bethel Grove and Prairie Grove and all
the groves in Washington County. I says, “If you did that I guess I would have
to put more fire in my sermons?” She says, “If you put more sermons in the fire,
we would be better off!” Well, that ought to take care of the fuel shortage issue for
the time being.

Let us now give attention to football for the season is on in full
blaze. My Grandpaw joined a professional team one time and brought athletic fame
to the family. He had big feet and his coach figured Grandpaw could run over the
opposition rough shod. But unfortunately Grandpaw was near-sighted and in a big game
for the championship, he grabbed the ball and ran triumphantly 92 yards

and that liked to ruin everything.

He slammed the ball on the turf and waved his arms in victory but the spectators
were momentarily silent. All the other players at the opposite end of the field
were standing still in startled amazement. The football Grandpaw had wasn’t a
football. It was another player’s helmet

ain’t it awful? Poor old Grandpaw thought the County Court house was a
Appendix

"News From Clyde"

News From Clyde Page 2

Some day, someone was a little nearsighted and this fact led to disaster and the end of a promising athletic career. It was a big championship game with the visiting team three points ahead in the last seconds of play. Suddenly, Grandpa grabbed the ball and ran ninety-five yards for a touchdown. He touched the ball to the turf and waved his arms in victorious triumph. There was a strange silence in the stands and all the other players stood in startled and amazed immobility. For the football Grandpa carried was not a football but another player's helmet! Poor old Grandpa! He thought the County Court House was a place to do a little sparkling and woo a prospective bride. So, he put on his stiff celluloid collar, perfumed his whiskers, got on a mule and rode to Faltville to do a little courting. Unfortunately, he took along a little sandbox to fortify his strength and the only courting he got done was with the Sheriff who arrested him on charges of being a bootlegger and put him in jail. Then he got out of jail and ready to start home the old rebel balked and wouldn't move a step. A doctor poured a little high life on him and that mule left town at ninety miles an hour. Grandpa said, "Quick Doc, pour me of that stuff an' let me get to catch that mule before he runs clear out of the country! It was a long race but the mule finally gave it up and laid down exhausted. Grandpa took the reins of his saddle and carried the mule the rest of the way home. Disappointed in his quest for a bride, he got hold of a Sears Roebuck catalog and ordered him a good looking woman by mail. He was disappointed again, for all he got was the dress the good looking woman was wearing in the catalog.

In one of our Church Night Fellowship dinners at Walnut Grove, I was out of town and Brother Lloyd Ross was asked to say grace. He got up and said, "The preacher ain't here tonight, so let us thank God and begin eating!"

With skyrocketing prices, the only way to get ahead seems to be a canvass. Ain't it so Brother Ross?
Appendix

“Burns, Bums and Bunko”

BURNS, BUMS AND BUNKO

WHOLESALE DEALERS

RINGTAIL WAMPUS CATS, HOOT OWLS AND PIZEN SNAKES

"YOU NAME IT AND WE'LL TAME IT"

BEAN POLE RIDGE ARKINSAW

Dear Pam so glad for you to remember your grandpappy on his birthday and we enjoyed your sweet letter so much and we send you and Randy our love and wishes for a Happy Christmas (DON'T OPEN THE ENCLOSED UNTIL CHRISTMAS AND THEN GO TO A BIG SHOW)

You mentioned riding the elevated and it brot back happy memories of years ago...44 years ago I met the train at LaSalle station and there was your mother—a lovely little girl—came up from Braidwood by herself to visit me at the Seminary...we got on the L and went out to 2330 North Halsted...Halsted, Fullerton and Lincoln(I believe its 2230 North) anyhow she had a big time. I wish you might go out to Seminary some day and look around...go to Virginia Library on campus and ask for Calvin Schmitt he is librarian...he was in New Mexico and visited us there about the time you were born...he would be glad to greet you.

Do you remember you liked Susan...she came here one day with her mother who was a Reed(Bileen) and you and Susan hit it off just right—I remember you went for a long walk across the fields and in the woods. She lives in Chivago and I am sure would be delighted to have you call her...her husband name is Jim Henderson, probably has telephone...he is in legal department of a big packing Co. I think its Swift and Co.
Appendix

“Did you hear . . .”

Did you hear about me being on Television (Ft Smith)? had a big time
The former Governor of Ark, Orval E Faubus is printing my newspaper
column in his Ozark Ark paper and other papers he publishes in the
State.
I am submitting a New National Anthem and if accepted Congress will
award me honorarium of $50,000.00

Do write us more

Be careful in the big city

Honey won’t you attend the Chicago Evening Club Sunday night
services in Orchestra Hall... they are wonderful and the greatest
speakers in the world... find out how you can get hold of printed speeches
or sermons and let me know

Again our love to you and Randy

Grandpappy Burns

Grandsammy Burns fixed the Christmas envelope so you
will have to thank her