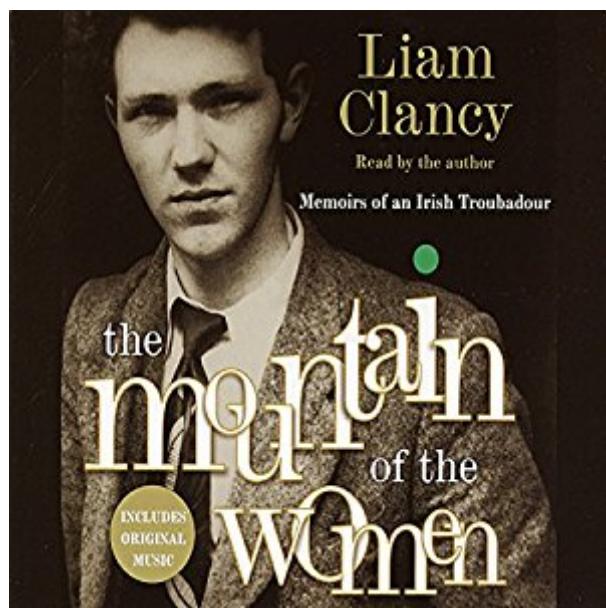


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# The Mountain Of The Women: Memoirs Of An Irish Troubadour



## Synopsis

In an irresistible tale of a life lived fully, if not always wisely, Liam Clancy, of the legendary Irish group the Clancy Brothers, describes his eventful journey from a small town in Ireland in the 1930s into the heart of the New York music scene in the 1950s and '60s. Following in the grand tradition of such Irish memoirs as Angela's Ashes and Are You Somebody?, Liam Clancy relates his life's story in a raucously funny and star-studded account of moving from provincial Ireland to the bars and clubs of New York City, to the cusp of fame as a member of Tommy Makem and the Clancy Brothers. Born in 1935, the eleventh out of as many children, young Liam was a naive and innocent lad of the Old Country. His memories of childhood include bounding over hills, streams, and the occasional mountain, getting lost, and eventually found, and making mischief in the way of a typical Irish boy. As an aimless nineteen-year-old, Clancy met a strange and wonderfully energetic lover of music, Ms. Diane Guggenheim, an American heiress. She and a colleague from America had set out to record regional Irish folk music, and their undertaking led them to Carrick-on-Suir in the shadow of Slievenamon, "The Mountain of the Women," where Mammie Clancy had been known to carry a tune or two in her kitchen. Guggenheim fell for young Liam and swept him along on her travels through the British Isles, the American Appalachians, and finally Greenwich Village, the undisputed Mecca for aspiring artists of every ilk in the late 1950s. Clancy was in New York to become an actor. But on the side, he played and sang with his brothers, Paddy and Tom, and fellow countryman Tommy Makem, in pubs like the legendary White Horse Tavern. In the heady atmosphere of the Village, Clancy's life was a party filled with music, sex, and McSorley's. His friendships with then-unknown artists such as Bob Dylan, Maya Angelou, Robert Redford, Lenny Bruce, Pete Seeger and Barbra Streisand form the backdrop of the charming adventures of a small-town boy making it big in the biggest of cities. In music circles, the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem are known as the Beatles of Irish music. The band's music continues to play on jukeboxes in pubs and bars, in living rooms of folk music fans, and in Irish American homes throughout the country. Liam Clancy's lively memoir captures their wild adventures on the road to fame and fortune, and brings to life a man who never lets himself off the hook for his sins, and happily views his success as a blessing. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## **Customer Reviews**

It is difficult to write an objective review of Liam Clancy's biography. I am such a Liam Clancy fan that I only see the book through a fan's eyes. The biography was almost like Liam telling his story over drinks, a delight to hear Liam speak no matter what he says. Not well written, but fun to read. I learned a bit about Liam's early life and little about his later life. My main disappointment is that the book was not updated to tell of the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem's later performing adventures as well as his later work. I only saw the Clancy Brothers a couple of times in their early days. Liam performed with Tommy Makem as a duo for several years and solo until his death. Liam and Tommy were a great duo until Liam's drinking got in the way. When Liam was sober he was a fantastic solo performer. I understand he finally quit drinking a few years before his death. All of the Clancy Brothers as well as Tommy Makem are gone. A bit of joy has left the world with their passing. This book is bit of Liam Clancy remaining. I still listen often to Liam Clancy as well as Liam and Tommy Makem on CD. As Bob Dylan said "Liam Clancy is the greatest ballad singer I ever heard." I agree with Bob Dylan. Liam Clancy is also a good story teller.

The Kindle eBook version is NOT what Liam published. No photos are included.. NONE. The words themselves are beautiful crafted and flow as a musical conversation. The story wrenches the heart with dialogue that puts you there in his life as it developed. Incredible story from a sweet raconteur. The photos added a drenching pathos to his presentation. This didn't even have Liam's cover photo as a young man with wonder and reach set in his eyes. Recommend you not download this kindle format. It made the entire purchase feel like a rip-off. There is no obvious mention that this is what they are presenting. Angry at such deviousness.

The true tale of a young man coming from a country who's culture values reflected the the U.S. 20 years previous, into the world of the ultra wealthy, and slightly twisted world of the Guggenheims, and the cultural revolution that was Greenwich Village in the mid to late 50's & 60's, is amazing. Being the slightly sheltered youngest of 9 children in a working poor family provided it's own challenges, especially when the road to success meant forming a partnership with older sibling that never quite got used to 'the younger brother' being an adult. All those challenges and insights make the beginning of Liam Clancy's life an engaging true story of a legendary musical accident that gained world acclaim. Liam's honesty, at times, dispells any romantic ideal of the singer, as he admits to the amount of influence booze had on his life and the inability to be faithful to the woman who lived with him and gave him a daughter. But, he speaks with honesty and never tries to cover the truth or excuse his behavior, and for that he gets points. There is another book about the Clancy brothers and their time in the spotlight, that I am going to read. This book only goes to the point of where the Clancy's and Tommy Makem are beginning to climb the stairway to the stars, and there was so much more of the story to be told. I thoroughly enjoyed this look into the world of this young man, and am looking forward to the next chapters in his life as told in *The Men Behind The Sweaters*.

This is one of the most engaging, beautiful memoirs I've read in twenty years. Liam Clancy, the youngest of the fabled Clancy Brothers, succeeded before his death in writing the story of his family and the internationally renowned singing group that lives on in countless recordings. At the same time, he depicts Ireland, that sacred country, as only a native can. As character and writer, Clancy is bold and brash, irreverent and tender, charming and unforgettable. If you love memoir, get this book as soon as you can and settle in for a delightful experience.

Life experience, not so much reconstructed as double-distilled, is recaptured in the telling of Liam Clancy's thrilling and insightful memoir. Here's his hometown, Carrick-on-Suir, an almost mythically Irish hometown in the backwaters of the Emerald Isle. Where careeneth a procession of townsfolk both dotty and dour: Here's the town publican. There goes a creepy-looking cluster of nuns. Hark the churchbell, tolling out the Angelus, and oh, have a heartbreakingly serving of tragedy along with your tea. Most important of all, observe the morally upright Mammy Clancy in action, pinning her hopes on her eleventh child: surely this shy impressionable son is a priest in the making. The author's eye fondly revisits family life in loving but not uncritical retrospect, the idealized Irish family, thrown headlong into life's tough struggles. An idyllic setting, interrupted one day by the arrival of

one world-weary American heiress with a hidden agenda. She's determined to travel the world collecting folk music with the young Liam as her assistant. But can it be, she wants to snag him and possess him as her own--much as Dido, the evil queen of Homeric legend, attempted to do to Ulysses? And if so, could you blame her? This kid's a natural: a real Irish choirboy with an old-world brogue and a penchant for reciting poetry. He obviously needs seducing. Ah, Liam, me boy, you're in for a bumpy ride... or rather, a picaresque romp from the footlights of backstage Dublin to the hollers of Appalachia, on to Cambridge, Mass., and New York's zany, East Village arts "scene," where you'll meet everybody who's anybody. And, every once in a while, right back home to Carrick again, trailing clouds of cultural alienation. And great green gobs of maternal disapprobation. There are enough imbedded elements of Tom Jones that one could easily conclude this has just got to be fiction. So it's well the author pinches us awake, as social injustice, poverty, narrow-mind religious judgementalism, moral hypocrisy and intellectual vapidly present themselves. Not that any of that stops our hero. As he describes becoming a force to be reckoned with-first on the stage, and then in popular music-Liam Clancy is forthright about a few gaffs and stumbles. The hardest to swallow-given the idealization of family that serves as oxygen during his early life-is brief, bitter mention of a daughter, the product of an early relationship, whom he largely declined to be a father to. An included photograph of the author, posed beside this beautiful child, is simply disturbing. As the memoir ends, The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem are just about to reach the inexplicable pinnacle of fame as accidental musicians. A bit unsettled by the nutty East Village scene, our boys momentarily return to the village of their roots-where the local townfolk haven't changed a bit-they are, as ever, totally insane. Back they go to New York. The reader senses the chronicle ahead. . . . Fame is fleeting, the singing group will eventually tire of life on the road, and, after all, to many amps can you crank a pennywhistle before someone's sinus linings hit a harmonic? One prays for Volume Two, wherein Liam, classical hero that we know him to be, crowns life's journey with maturity and self-knowledge, and expiates a life of fond transgressions by founding his own rollicking, loving Celtic dynasty. Of course, Volume 2 will need to be as thoughtful, resonant, funny and well-crafted as the present work, so that the reading of Liam's life remains in keeping with the living of it.

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