



Celtic Song Lyrics

Various

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Chapter 1

The Rocky Road to Dublin

words and music traditional

In the merry month of May, From my home I started,
Left the girls of Tuam, Nearly broken hearted,
Saluted father dear, Kissed my darlin' mother,
Drank a pint of beer, My grief and tears to smother,
Then off to reap the corn, And leave where I was born,
I cut a stout blackthorn, To banish ghost and goblin,
In a brand new pair of brogues, I rattled o'er the bogs,
And frightened all the dogs, On the rocky road to Dublin.

One, two, three, four five,
Hunt the hare and turn her
Down the rocky road
And all the ways to Dublin,
Whack-fol-lol-de-ra.

In Mullingar that night, I rested limbs so weary,
Started by daylight, Next mornin' light and airy,
Took a drop of the pure, To keep my heart from sinkin',
That's an Irishman's cure, Whene'er he's on for drinking.
To see the lasses smile, Laughing all the while,
At my curious style, 'Twould set your heart a-bubblin'.
They ax'd if I was hired, The wages I required,
Till I was almost tired, Of the rocky road to Dublin.

In Dublin next arrived, I thought it such a pity,
To be so soon deprived, A view of that fine city.
Then I took a stroll, All among the quality,
My bundle it was stole, In a neat locality;
Something crossed my mind, Then I looked behind;
No bundle could I find, Upon my stick a wobblin'.

Enquirin' for the rogue, They said my Connacht brogue,
Wasn't much in vogue, On the rocky road to Dublin.

From there I got away, My spirits never failin'
Landed on the quay As the ship was sailin';
Captain at me roared, Said that no room had he,
When I jumped aboard, A cabin found for Paddy,
Down among the pigs I played some funny rigs,
Danced some hearty jigs, The water round me bubblin',
When off Holyhead, I wished myself was dead,
Or better far instead, On the rocky road to Dublin.

The boys of Liverpool, When we safely landed,
Called myself a fool; I could no longer stand it;
Blood began to boil, Temper I was losin',
Poor ould Erin's isle They began abusin',
"Hurrah my soul," sez I, My shillelagh I let fly;
Some Galway boys were by, Saw I was a hobble in,
Then with a loud hurray, They joined in the affray.
We quickly cleared the way, For the rocky road to Dublin.

Chapter 2

I'll tell me ma

words and music traditional

I'll tell my ma when I get home,
The boys won't leave the girls alone
They pull my hair and stole my comb
But that's all right till I go home

She is handsome, she is pretty,
She is the Belle of Belfast city
She is a courtin' one, two, three,
Please won't you tell me who is she

Albert Mooney says he loves her,
All the boys are fightin' for her
Knock at the door and ring at the bell,
Saying oh my true love, are you well

Out she comes as white as snow,
Rrings on her fingers, bells on her toes
Ould Johnny Morrissey says she'll die
If she doesn't get the fella with the roving eye

Let the wind and the rain and the hail blow high
And the snow come travellin' through the sky
She's as sweet as apple pie,
She'll get her own lad by and by

When she gets a lad of her own
She won't tell her ma when she gets home
Let them all come as they will
For it's Albert Mooney she loves still

Chapter 3

Star of the county down

words and music traditional

Near to Banbridge Town, in the County Down
One morning last July,
Down a breen green came a sweet colleen,
And she smiled as she passed me by;
Well, she looked so sweet from her two bare feet
To the sheen of her nut-brown hair;
Such a coaxing elf, sure I shook myself
To make sure I was really there.

From Bantry Bay up to Derry Quay,
And from Galway to Dublin town,
No maid I've seen like the sweet colleen
That I met in the County Down.

As she onward sped, sure I shook my head
And I looked with a feeling rare.
Then I said, says I, to a passer-by,
"Who's the maid with the nut-brown hair?"
Well, he smiled at me, and with pride says he,
"That's the gem of old Ireland's crown,
She's young Rosie McCann from the banks of the Bann,
She's the Star of the County Down."

Well I've traveled a bit, but ne'er was hit
Since my roving career began;
Then fair and square I surrendered there
To the charms of young Rose McCann.
I'd a heart to let and no tenant yet
Did I see in shawl or gown,

But in she went and I asked no rent
From the Star of the County Down.

At the harvest fair, I'll be surely there
And I'll dress in my Sunday clothes
With my shoes shone bright, and my hat cocked right
For a smile from my nut-brown Rose.
No pipe I'll smoke, and no horse I'll yoke
Though with rust my plow turns brown,
Till a smiling bride by my own fireside
Sits the Star of the County Down.

Chapter 4

Bonnie Ship the Diamond

words and music Traditional

*The Diamond is a ship, my lads
For the Davis Strait we're bound
The quay it is all garnished
With bonnie lasses 'round
Captain Thompson gives the order
To sail the ocean wide
Where the sun it never sets, my lads
Nor darkness dims the sky*

*For it's cheer up my lads
Let your hearts never fail
For the bonnie ship the Diamond
Goes a-hunting for the whale*

*Along the quay at Peterhead
The lasses stand aroon
Wi' their shawls all pulled around them
And the saut tears runnin' doon
Don't you weep, my bonnie wee lass
Though you be left behind
For the rose will grow on Greenland's ice
Before we change our mind
Here's a health to the Resolution
Likewise the Eliza Swan
Three cheers for the Battler of Montrose
And the Diamond, ship of fame
We wear the trousers o' the white
The jackets o' the blue*

*When we get back to Peterhead
We'll hae sweethearts enou'
It will be bright both day and night
When the Greenland lads come hame
Our ship full up with oil, my lads
And money to our name
We'll make the cradles for to rock
And the blankets for to tear
And every lass in Peterhead sing
"Hushabye, my dear"*

Chapter 5

Finnegan's Wake

words and music by traditional

Tim Finnegan lived in Walkin Street,
A gentle Irishman mighty odd
He had a brogue both rich and sweet,
An' to rise in the world he carried a hod
You see he'd a sort of a tipplers way
but for the love for the liquor poor Tim was born
To help him on his way each day,
he'd a drop of the craythur every morn

Whack fol the dah now dance to yer partner
round the flure yer trotters shake
Bend an ear to the truth they tell ye,
we had lots of fun at Finnegan's Wake

One morning Tim got rather full,
his head felt heavy which made him shake
Fell from a ladder and he broke his skull, and
they carried him home his corpse to wake
Rolled him up in a nice clean sheet,
and laid him out upon the bed
A bottle of whiskey at his feet
and a barrel of porter at his head

His friends assembled at the wake,
and Widow Finnegan called for lunch
First she brought in tay and cake,
then pipes, tobacco and whiskey punch
Biddy O'Brien began to cry,
"Such a nice clean corpse, did you ever see,

Tim, auvreem! O, why did you die?",
"Will ye hould your gob?" said Paddy McGee
Then Maggie O'Connor took up the cry,
"O Biddy" says she "you're wrong, I'm sure"
Biddy gave her a belt in the gob
and sent her sprawling on the floor
Then the war did soon engage,
t'was woman to woman and man to man
Shillelagh law was all the rage
and a row and a ruction soon began
Mickey Maloney ducked his head
when a bucket of whiskey flew at him
It missed, and falling on the bed,
the liquor scattered over Tim
Now the spirits new life gave the corpse, my joy!
Tim jumped like a Trojan from the bed
Cryin will ye walup each girl and boy,
t'underin' Jaysus, do ye think I'm dead?"

Chapter 6

Whiskey in the jar

words and music traditional

As I was going over the far famed Kerry mountains
I met with captain Farrell and his money he was counting.
I first produced my pistol, and then produced my rapier.
Said stand and deliver, for I am a bold deceiver,

musha ring dumma do damma da
whack for the daddy 'ol
whack for the daddy 'ol
there's whiskey in the jar

I counted out his money, and it made a pretty penny.
I put it in my pocket and I took it home to Jenny.
She said and she swore, that she never would deceive me,
but the devil take the women, for they never can be easy
I went into my chamber, all for to take a slumber,
I dreamt of gold and jewels and for sure it was no wonder.
But Jenny took my charges and she filled them up with water,
Then sent for captain Farrel to be ready for the slaughter.

It was early in the morning, as I rose up for travel,
The guards were all around me and likewise captain Farrel.
I first produced my pistol, for she stole away my rapier,
But I couldn't shoot the water so a prisoner I was taken.

If anyone can aid me, it's my brother in the army,
If I can find his station down in Cork or in Killarney.
And if he'll come and save me, we'll go roving near Kilkenny,
And I swear he'll treat me better than me darling sportling Jenny

Now some men take delight in the drinking and the roving,
But others take delight in the gambling and the smoking.
But I take delight in the juice of the barley,
And courting pretty fair maids in the morning bright and early

The Lark in the morning

The lark in the morning she rises off her nest
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her breast
And like the jolly ploughboy she whistles and she sings
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her wings

Oh, Roger the ploughboy he is a dashing blade
He goes whistling and singing over yonder leafy shade
He met with pretty Susan, she's handsome I declare
She is far more enticing then the birds all in the air

The lark in the morning she rises off her nest
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her breast
And like the jolly ploughboy she whistles and she sings
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her wings

One evening coming home from the rakes of the town
The meadows been all green and the grass had been cut down
As I should chance to tumble all in the new-mown hay
Oh, it's kiss me now or never love, this bonnie lass did say

The lark in the morning she rises off her nest
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her breast
And like the jolly ploughboy she whistles and she sings
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her wings

When twenty long weeks they were over and were past
Her mommy chanced to notice how she thickened round the waist
It was the handsome ploughboy, the maiden she did say
For he caused for to tumble all in the new-mown hay

The lark in the morning she rises off her nest
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her breast
And like the jolly ploughboy she whistles and she sings
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her wings

Here's a health to y'all ploughboys wherever you may be
That likes to have a bonnie lass a sitting on his knee
With a jug of good strong porter you'll whistle and you'll sing
For a ploughboy is as happy as a prince or a king

The lark in the morning she rises off her nest
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her breast
And like the jolly ploughboy she whistles and she sings
She goes home in the evening with the dew all on her wings

Chapter 8

Rebels of the Sacred Heart

By Flogging Molly

Now I'm aimin' for heaven
But probably wind up down in hell
Where upon this alter I will hang my guilt ridden head
But it's time I'll take before I begin
Three sheets to the wind, Three sheets to the wind
Rebels are we, though heavy our hearts shall always be
Ah, no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart
I said no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart

Terrified of the open road
Yeah, where it leads ya never know
But rest assured he'll be on you back
Yeah, the Holy Ghost through his tounques in black
As th band dog howls and the young girl cries
The blessed virgin in her proud dad's eye
The albatross hangin' round your neck
Is the cross you bare for your sins he bleeds
Rebels are we, though heavy our hearts shall always be
Ah, no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart

Genuflect all you refugees who fled the land
Now on guilt you kneel
And say a prayer for those left behind
From beyond the pale to the Northern sky
So you saved your shillins and your last six pence
Cause in God's name they built a barbed wire fence

Be glad you sailed for a better day
But don't forget there'll be hell to pay
Rebels are we, though heavy our hearts shall always be
Ah, no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart
I said no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart

Resurrection no protection all things life must be
Ah no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart

Now bless me father for I have sinned
But it's the same old story again and again and again
Ah well, such is the bread of an everyday life
From mornin' to noon to this shadowless-night
Rebels are we, though heavy our hearts shall always be
Ah, no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart
I said no ball or chain no prison shall keep
We're the rebels of the sacred heart

Chapter 9

Rare Ould Times

Raised on songs and stories, heroes of renown.

Are the passing tales and glories, that once was Dublin town.
The hallowed halls and houses, the haunting children's rhymes.
That once was Dublin city in the rare old times.

Ring a ring a Rosie, as the light declines,
I remember Dublin city in the rare old times

My name it is Sean Dempsey, as Dublin as can be
Born hard and late in Pimlico, in a house that ceased to be.
By trade I was a cooper, lost out to redundancy.
Like my house that fell to progress, my trade's a memory.

And I courted Peggy Dignan, as pretty as you please,
A rogue and child of Mary, from the rebel Liberties.
I lost her to a student chap, with skin as black as coal.
When he took her off to Birmingham, she took away my soul.

Ring a ring a Rosie, as the light declines,
I remember Dublin city in the rare old times

The years have made me bitter, tha gargle dims my brain,
'cause Dublin keeps on changing, and nothing seems the same.
The Pillar and the Met have gone,
the Royale long since pulled down,
As the great unyielding concrete, makes a city of my town.

Ring a ring a Rosie, as the light declines,
I remember Dublin city in the rare old times

Fare thee well sweet Anna Liffey,
I can no longer stay,
And watch the new glass cages, that spring up along the Quay.
My mind's too full of memories, too old to hear new chimes,
I'm part of what was Dublin, in the rare old times.

Ring a ring a Rosie, as the light declines,
I remember Dublin city in the rare old times

Chapter 10

Green Fields of France

Well, how do you do, Private William McBride,
Do you mind if I sit down here by your graveside?
And rest for awhile in the warm summer sun,
I've been walking all day, and I'm nearly done.
And I see by your gravestone you were only 19
When you joined the glorious fallen in 1916,
Well, I hope you died quick and I hope you died clean
Or, Willie McBride, was it slow and obscene?

Did they Beat the drum slowly, did they play the pipes lowly?
Did the rifles fire o'er you as they lowered you down?
Did the bugles sound The Last Post in chorus?
Did the pipes play the Flowers of the Forest?

And did you leave a wife or a sweetheart behind
In some loyal heart is your memory enshrined?
And, though you died back in 1916,
To that loyal heart are you forever 19?
Or are you a stranger without even a name,
Forever enshrined behind some glass pane,
In an old photograph, torn and tattered and stained,
And fading to yellow in a brown leather frame?

The sun's shining down on these green fields of France;
The warm wind blows gently, and the red poppies dance.
The trenches have vanished long under the plow;
No gas and no barbed wire, no guns firing now.
But here in this graveyard that's still No Man's Land
The countless white crosses in mute witness stand
To man's blind indifference to his fellow man.

And a whole generation who were butchered and damned.

And I can't help but wonder, no Willie McBride,
Do all those who lie here know why they died?
Did you really believe them when they told you "The Cause?"
Did you really believe that this war would end wars?
Well the suffering, the sorrow, the glory, the shame
The killing, the dying, it was all done in vain,
For Willie McBride, it all happened again,
And again, and again, and again, and again.

Chapter 11

The Scotsman

words and music by Mike Cross

Well a Scotsman clad in kilt left a bar on evening fair
And one could tell by how we walked that he drunk more than his share
He fumbled round until he could no longer keep his feet
Then he stumbled off into the grass to sleep beside the street
Ring ding diddle diddle I de oh ring di diddly I oh
He stumbled off into the grass to sleep beside the street

About that time two young and lovely girls just happend by
And one says to the other with a twinkle in her eye
See yon sleeping Scotsman so strong and handsome built
I wonder if it's true what they don't wear beneath the kilt
Ring ding diddle diddle I de oh ring di diddly I oh
I wonder if it's true what they don't wear beneath the kilt

They crept up on that sleeping Scotsman quiet as could be
Lifted up his kilt about an inch so they could see
And there behold, for them to see, beneath his Scottish skirt
Was nothing more than God had graced him with upon his birth
Ring ding diddle diddle I de oh ring di diddly I oh
Was nothing more than God had graced him with upon his birth

They marveled for a moment, then one said we must be gone
Let's leave a present for our friend, before we move along
As a gift they left a blue silk ribbon, tied into a bow
Around the bonnie star, the Scots kilt did lift and show
Ring ding diddle diddle I de oh ring di diddly I oh
Around the bonnie star, the Scots kilt did lift and show

Now the Scotsman woke to nature's call and stumbled towards a tree
Behind a bush, he lift his kilt and gawks at what he sees
And in a startled voice he says to what's before his eyes.
O lad I don't know where you been but I see you won first prize

Ring ding diddle diddle I de oh ring di diddly I oh
O lad I don't know where you been but I see you won first prize

Chapter 12

Donald Where's Your Troosers

I just came down from the Isle of Skye
I'm no very big but I'm awful shy
All the lassies shout as I walk by,
"Donald, Where's Your Troosers?"

Let the wind blow high and the wind blow low
Through the streets in my kilt I go
All the lassies cry, "Hello!
Donald, where's your trousers?"

I went to a fancy ball
It was slippery in the hall
I was afeared that I may fall
Because I nay had on trousers

I went down to London town
To have a little fun in the underground
All the Ladies turned their heads around, saying,
"Donald, where's your trousers?"

The lassies love me every one
But they must catch me if they can
You canna put the breeks on a highland man, saying,
"Donald, where's your trousers?"

Chapter 13

Loch Lomond

By yon bonnie banks and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.

Chorus

*O ye'll tak' the high road and I'll tak' the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland afore ye.
But me and my true love will never meet again,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.*

'Twas there that we parted in yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side o' Ben Lomond.
Where in deep purple hue, the hieland hills we view,
And the moon comin' out in the gloamin'.

The wee birdies sing and the wild flowers spring,
And in sunshine the waters are sleeping:
But the broken heart, it kens nae second spring again,
Tho' the waefu' may cease from their greeting.

Chapter 14

Welly Boot Song

By Billy Connolly

If it wasn't for your wellies where would you be
You'd be in the hospital or infirmary
'Cause you would have a dose of the flu or even pleurisy
If you didn't have your feet in your wellies

Oh wellies they are wonderful, oh wellies they are swell
'Cause they keep out the water and they keep in the smell
And when you're sitting in a room you can always tell
When some bugger takes off his wellies

If it wasn't for your wellies where would you be
You'd be in the hospital or infirmary
'Cause you would have a dose of the flu or even pleurisy
If you didn't have your feet in your wellies

Oh and when you're out walking in the country with a bird
And you're strolling over fields just like a farmer's herd
And somebody shouts, "Keep off the grass" and you think how absurd
and SQUELCH you find why farmers all wear wellies

If it wasn't for your wellies where would you be
You'd be in the hospital or infirmary
'Cause you would have a dose of the flu or even pleurisy
If you didn't have your feet in your wellies

There's fishermen and firemen, there's farmers and all
Men out digging ditches and working in the snow
This country it would grind to a halt and not a thing would grow

If it wasn't for the workers in their wellies

If it wasn't for your wellies where would you be
You'd be in the hospital or infirmary
'Cause you would have a dose of the flu or even pleurisy
If you didn't have you're feet in your wellies

Oh Edward, Heath and Wilson they haven't made a hit
So you'd better get your feet in your wellies

If it wasn't for your wellies where would you be
You'd be in the hospital or infirmary
'Cause you would have a dose of the flu or even pleurisy
If you didn't have you're feet in your wellies

Chapter 15

Scotland the Brave

by Cliff Hanley

Hark when the night is falling
Hear! hear the pipes are calling,
Loudly and proudly calling,
Down thro' the glen.
There where the hills are sleeping,
Now feel the blood a-leaping,
High as the spirits
of the old Highland men.

Chorus

Towering in gallant fame,
Scotland my mountain hame,
High may your proud
standard gloriously wave,
Land of my high endeavour,
Land of the shining rivers,
Land of my heart for ever,
Scotland the brave.

High in the misty Highlands,
Out by the purple islands,
Brave are the hearts that beat
Beneath Scottish skies.
Wild are the winds to meet you,
Staunch are the friends that greet you,
Kind as the love that shines
from fair maidens' eyes.

Chorus

Far off in sunlit places,
Sad are the Scottish faces,

Yearning to feel the kiss
Of sweet Scottish rain.
Where tropic skies are beaming,
Love sets the heart a-dreaming,
Longing and dreaming for the homeland again.

Chapter 16

Have some Madiera, M'dear

words and music Michael Flanders and Donald Swann

Luggedy lum, Luggedy lum, Luggedy lum
Scoobie doobey, oobla shoobie, scoobie ah, ha, ha, ha

She was young. She was fair. She was new. She was nice.
She was pure. She was sweet, seventeen.
He was old. He was vile, no stranger to vice.
He was bad. He was base. He was mean... .
He had slyly inviegled her up to his flat
to view his collection of... ..stamps,
and he said as he hastened to put out the wine
his cigar, the cat... ..and the lamps:

"Have some Madiera, m'dear?
You really have nothing to fear..
I don't want to tempt you. That wouldn't be right.
One shouldn't drink spirits at this time of night.
Have some Madiera, m'dear... ..
It's really an excellent year.
I don't care for Sherry, and one cannot drink Stout,
and Port is a wine I can well do without!
You see, it's strictly a case of 'Chacun a son GOUT... .'
Have some Madiera, m'dear?"

Unaware of the wiles of the snake in the grass
And the fate of a maiden who topes.
She lowered her standards by raising her glass,
Her mind, her courage, and his hopes.
She sipped it. She drank it. She drained it. she did!
He quietly re-filled it again,

and he said, as he secretly carved one more notch
on the butt of his gold-handled cane... .

"Have some Madiera, m'dear?

I have a small cask of it here...

and once it's been opened, it won't keep,

Finish it up; it will help you to... sleep."

"Have some Madiera, m'dear?

It's ever so much nicer than Beer!

Now if it were Gin you'd do wrong to say 'yes'

the Evil gin does is hard to assess...

and, besides, it's inclined to affect my Prowess... .

Have some Madiera, m'dear?"

Then there flashed thru her mind what her mother had said
with her ante-pen-ultimate breath:

"Oh, my child, should you gaze on the wine that is red:

BE PREPARED FOR A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH!"

She let go the glass with a shy little cry. (eek!)

Crash! Tinkle! It fell to the floor.

When he said: "What in Heaven?" She made no reply.

Up her mind and in a dash for the door!

"Have some Madiera, m'dear?"

Rang out down the hall, loud and clear

in a tremulous voice that was filled with Despair

as she paused to take breath in the cool, midnight air...

"Have some Madiera, m'dear?... .. "

The words seemed to ring in her ear.

Until the next morning she woke up, in bed

with a smile on her lips, and an ache in her head,

and a BEARD at her earlobe which * tickled *, and said:

"Have some Madiera, m'dear?"

Chapter 17

Gypsy Rover

words and music traditional

A gypsy rover came over the hill
Down through the valley so shady.
He whistled and he sang 'til the green woods rang
And he won the heart of a lady.

Ah-dee-doo-ah-dee-doo-dah-day
Ah-dee-doo-ah-dee-day-dee
He whistled and he sang 'til the green woods rang
And he won the heart of a lady.

She left her father's castle gate.
She left her own fine lover.
She left her servants and her state
To follow her gypsy rover.

She left behind her velvet gown
And shoes of Spanish leather
They whistled and they sang 'till the green woods rang
As they rode off together

Last night, she slept on a goose feather bed
With silken sheets for cover
Tonight she'll sleep on the cold, cold ground
Beside her gypsy lover

Her father saddled up his fastest stead
And roamed the valley all over.
Sought his daughter at great speed
And the whistlin' gypsy rover.

He came at last to a mansion fine
Down by the river Claydee.

And there was music and there was wine
For the gypsy and his lady.

"He is no gypsy, my Father," she cried
"but Lord of these lands all over.
And I shall stay 'til my dying day
with my whistlin' gypsy rover."



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