

'Singlish Folk'

Broadsheet

No.15

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Mrs McGrath

Oh, Mrs. McGrath, the sergeant said,
Would you like to make a soldier out of your son, Ted?
With a scarlet coat, and a three-cocked hat,
Now Mrs. McGrath, wouldn't you like that?
Wid yer too-ri-aa, fol de diddle aa
Too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-aa.

Oh Mrs. McGrath lived by the seashore
For the space of seven long years or more;
Till she saw a big ship sail into the bay,
Here's my son, Ted, wisha, clear the way!

Oh, Captain, dear, where have ye been
Have you been in the Meditereen?
Will ye tell me the news of my son, Ted?
Is the poor boy livin', or is he dead?

Ah, well up comes Ted without any legs
An in their place he had two wooden pegs,
She kissed him a dozen times or two,
Saying, Holy Moses, 'tisn't you.

Oh then were ye drunk, or were ye blind
That ye left your two fine legs behind?
Or was it walkin' upon the sea
Wore your two fine legs from the knees away?

Oh, I wasn't drunk and I wasn't blind
But I left my two fine legs behind.
For a cannon ball, on the fifth of May,
Took my two fine legs from the knees away.

Oh, Teddy, me boy, the old widow cried,
Yer two fine legs were yer mammy's pride,
Them stumps of a tree wouldn't do at all,
Why didn't ye run from the big cannon ball?

All foreign wars I do proclaim
Between Don John and the King of Spain
And by herrins I'll make them rue the time
That they swept the legs from a child of mine.

Sam Hall

Oh my name it is Sam Hall is Sam Hall
Oh my name it is Sam Hall is Sam Hall
Oh my name it is Sam Hall
and I hate you one and all
You're a bunch of mockers all
Gad damn your eyes
Blast your soul, Bloody Hell

Oh they took me to the quad to the quad (2x)
Oh they took me to the quad
and they said you'll hang by God
I know I will I said ...

Oh the preacher he did come ...
And he looked so god'dam glum
He can kiss my ruddy bum

Star of the County Down

Near Banbridge town, in the County Down
One morning in July
Down a boreen green came a sweet colleen
And she smiled as she passed me by.
She looked so sweet from her two white feet
To the sheen of her nut-brown hair
Such a coaxing elf, I'd to shake myself
To make sure I was standing 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 I shook my head
And I gazed with a feeling rare
And I said, says I, to a passerby
"who's the maid with the nut-brown hair?"
He smiled at me, and with pride says he,
"That's the gem of Ireland's crown.
She's young Rosie McCann
from the banks of the Bann
She's the star of the County Down."
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.

I've travelled a bit, but never was hit
Since my roving career began
But 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 meet with in shawl or gown
But in she went and I asked no rent
From the star of the County Down.

At the crossroads fair I'll be surely there
And I'll dress in my Sunday clothes
And I'll try sheep's eyes, and deludhering lies
On the heart of the nut-brown rose.
No pipe I'll smoke, 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.

Sam Hall contd.

Oh the Sherrif he came too
And he brought his boys in blue
A god'dam mottly crew ...

So its up the rope I'll go
With the crowds all down below
Sayin' Sam we told you so ...

I saw Molly in the crowd
And I shouted right out loud
Oh Molly ain't you proud ...

On Ilkley Moor ba't 'at

Where hast tha' bin since a' saw thee
On Ilkley Moor ba't 'at
Where hast tha' bin since a' saw thee
Where hast tha' bin since a' saw thee
On Ilkley Moor ba't 'at
On Ilkley Moor ba't 'at
On Ilkley Moor ba't 'at

Tha's bin a courting Mary Jane
On Ilkley Moor ba't 'at
Etc.

Tha's gonna catch thee death o' cold

Then we shall 'ave to bury thee

Then t'worms'll come 'n eat thee up

Then t'ducks'll come an' eat up t'worms

Then us'll come 'n eat up t'ducks

Then we shall all 'ave etten thee

That's how we gets us ow'en back

Arthur McBride

I had a first cousin called Arthur McBride
He and I took a stroll down by the sea side
A seeking good fortune and what might betide
Being just as the day it was dawning
Then after resting we both took a tramp
And met Sergeant Harper and Corporal Cramp
And besides a wee drummer who beat up the camp
With a rowdy-dow-dow in the morning

He said 'my fine fellows if you will enlist
A guinea you quickly will have in your fist
And besides a crown for to kick up the dust
And drink the King's health in the morning'
Had we been such fools as to take the advance
With a wee bit of money we'd have to run chance
'Do ye thin it no scruples to send us to France
Where we would be killed in the morning'

He says 'My young fellows if I hear but one word
I instantly now will out with my sword
And into your bodies as strength will support
So now my gay devils take warning'
But Arthur and I we took the odds
And we gave them no chance to draw out their swords
Our wacking Shillelaghs came over their heads
And paid them right smart in the morning

As for the young drummer we rifled his pouch
And we made a football of his rowdy-dow-dow
And into the ocean to rock and to roll
And barring the day it's returning
As for the rapier that hung by his side
We flung it as far as we could in the tide
'To the Devil I pit you', says Arthur McBride
To temper your steel in the morning

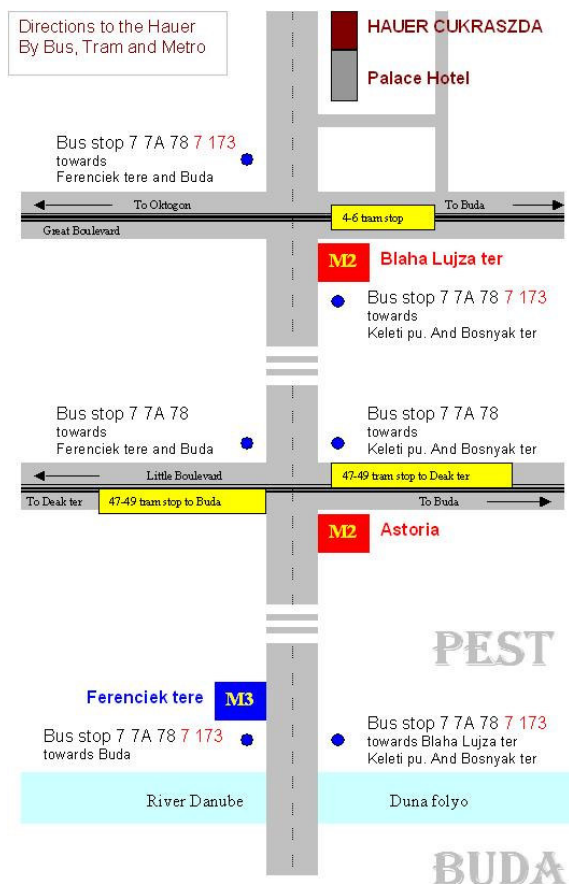
The Ould Triangle (Brendan Behan)

Oh! a hungry feeling, it came o'er me stealing
And the mice they were squealing in my prison cell
And the ould triangle, went jingle jangle
All along the banks of the Royal Canal.

To begin the morning, the screw was bawling
Get up you bowsies and clean out your cell
And the ould triangle, went jingle jangle
All along the banks of the Royal Canal.

In the female prison there are seventy-five women
It's among them I wish I did dwell
And the ould triangle, went jingle jangle
All along the banks of the Royal Canal.

I wish to blazes they'd change the wages
from fifty shillings ah to two pounds ten.
Then the ould triangle, could go jingle jangle
All along the banks of the Royal Canal.
All along the banks of the Royal Canal.



Further Information
stevejones@axelero.hu
www.hunglish.net

The Rocky Road To Dublin

In the merry month of May from my home I started,
Left the girls of Tuam, nearly broken hearted
Saluted father dear, kissed me darlin' mother,
Drink a pint of beer me grief and tears to smother
Then off to reap the corn, and leave where I was born,
Cut a stout blackthorn to banish ghosts and goblins
In a brand new pair of brogues I rattled o'er the bogs
And frighten all the dogs on the rocky road to Dublin

Chorus:

One, two, three, four, five hunt the hare and turn her
down the rocky road
And all the ways to Dublin, whack fol al de rah

In Mullingar that night I rested limbs so weary
Started by daylight next morning light and airy,
Took a drop o' the pure, to keep me heart from sinkin'
That's the Paddy's cure whenever he's on for drinkin'
To see the lassies smile, laughin' all while
At me curious style, 'twould set your heart a-bubblin'
They asked 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
Me bundle it was stolen in a neat locality
Something crossed me mind, then I looked behind
No bundle could I find upon me stick a-wobblin'
Enquirin' after the rogue, the said me Connaught brogue
Wasn't much in vogue, on the rocky road to Dublin

From there I got a way, me spirits never failin'
Landed on the quay just as the ship was sailin'
Captain at me roared, said that no room had he
When I jumped aboard, a captain found for Paddy
Down among the pigs, I skipped some funny rigs
I played some hearty jigs, the water round me bubblin'
When off Holyhead, I wished meself was dead
Or better far instead, on the rocky road to Dublin

The boys of Liverpool, when we safely landed
Call myself a fool; I could no longer stand it
Blood began to boil, temper I was losin'
Poor ould Erin's isle the began abusin'
"Hurrah me soul," says I, my shillelagh I let fly
Galway boys were by, saw I was a hobblin'
With a loud a hurray, they joined in the affray
We quickly cleared the way on the rocky road to Dublin

Sally Gardens

Down by the Sally gardens
My love and I did meet;
She passed the Sally gardens
With little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy,
As the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish
with her did not agree.

In a field by the river
My love and I did stand
And on my leaning shoulder
She laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy,
As the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish
And now am full of tears.

Phil the Fluter's Ball

Have you heard of Phil the Fluter, of the town of Ballymuck?
The times were going hard with him, in fact the man was broke.
So he just sent out a notice to his neighbours, one an all.
As to how he'd like their company that evening at a ball.
And when writin' out he was careful to suggest to them,
That if they found a hat of his convenient to the door,
The more they put in, whenever he requested them
The better would the music be for batterin' the flute.
With the toot of the flute, and the twiddle of the fiddle-O!
Hopping in the middle, like a herrin' on the griddle-O!
Up! down, hands around, crossing to the wall-O!
Hadn't we the gaiety at Phil the Fluter's Ball.

There was Mister Denis Dogherty, who kep' the runnin' dog;
There was little crooked Paddy, from the Tiraloughett bog;
There was boys from every Barony, and girls from ev'ry "art"
And the beautiful Miss Bradys, in a private ass an' cart,
And along with them came bouncing Mrs. Cafferty,
Little Micky Mulligan was also to the fore,
Rose, Suzanne, and Margaret O'Rafferty,
The flower of Ardmagullion, and the pride of Pethravore.

First, little Micky Mulligan got up to show them how,
And then the Widda' Cafferty steps out and makes her bow,
I could dance you off your legs, sez she, as sure as you are born,
If ye'll only make the piper play, "The hare was in the corn."
So Phil plays up to the best of his ability,
The lady and the gentleman begin to do their share;
Faith, then Mick it's you that has agility,
Begorra Mrs. Cafferty, yer leppin' like a hare!

Then Phil the Fluter tipped a wink to little Crooked Pat,
"I think it's nearly time," sez he, "for passin' round the hat."
So Paddy pass'd the caubeen round, and looking mighty cute.
Sez, "Ye've got to pay the piper when he toothers on the flute."
Then all joined in wid the greatest joviality,
Covering the buckle, and the shuffle, and the cut;
Jigs were danced, of the very finest quality,
But the Widda' bet the company at "handling the fut."

Dublin In The Rare Ould Times (Pete St. John)

Raised on songs and stories, heroes of renowned
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 ould times

Chorus: Ring-a-ring-a-rosie as the light declines
I remember Dublin City in the rare ould times

Oh, 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 me house that fell to progress, my trade to memory

I courted Peggy Diegnan, as pretty as you please
Oh, a rogue and a 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

The years have made me bitter, the gargle dims my brain
For Dublin keeps on changin' and nothing stays the same
The Pillar and the Met are gone, the Royal long since pulled
As this gray unyielding concrete makes a city of our town

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 ould times

I Know My Love

I know my love by his way of walking
And I know my love by his way of talking
And I know my love in a jacket blue
And if my love leaves me what will I do

Chorus:
And still she cried I love him the best
And a troubled mind sure 'twill know no rest
And still she cried bonny boys are few
And if my love leaves me what will I do

There is a dance hall in the Mardyke
And it's there my love he goes every night
And he sits a queer one down on his knees
And don't you know how it vexes me

If my love knew I could wash and wring
And if my love knew I could weave and spin
I would weave a coat of the fines kind
But the want money leaves me behind

I know my love is a handsome Rover
And I know he'll roam the whole world over
And in dear old Ireland no longer tarry
And an English girl sure he's sure to marry

Curragh Of Kildare

The winter it is past and the summer's come at last
And the small birds are singing in the trees
Their little hearts are glad but mine is very sad
For my true love is far away from me

Chorus:
And it's straight I will repair to the Curragh of Kildare
For it's there I'll find tidings of my dear

The rose upon the briar by the water running near
Gives joy to the linnet and the bee
Their little hearts are blessed but mine can find no rest
For my true love is far away from me

A livery I'll wear and I'll comb back my hair
In velvet so green I will appear
And it's straight I will repair to the Curragh of Kildare
For it's there I'll find tidings of my dear

All you who are in love and cannot it remove
I pity the pain that you may endure
For experience lets me know that your hearts are full of woe
And a woe that no mortal can endure

The Band Played Waltzing Matilda

When I was a young man I carried me pack
And I lived the free life of a rover
From the Murray's green basin to the dusty Outback
I waltzed my Matilda all over

Then in 1915 me country said, "Son,
It's time you stopped rambling, there's work to be done"
So they gave me a tin hat, and they gave me a gun
And they sent me away to the war

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
When the ship pulled away from the quay
And amidst all the tears, flag waving and cheers
We sailed off for Gallipoli

And how well I remember that terrible day
When our blood stained the sand and the water
And how in that hell that they call Suvla Bay
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter

Johnny Turk he was ready, he'd primed himself well
He rained us with bullets, and he showered us with shells
And in five minutes flat he'd blown us all to hell
Nearly blew us back home to Australia

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
When we stopped to bury our slain
We buried ours, and the Turks buried theirs
Then we started all over again

And those that were left, well, we tried to survive
In that mad world of blood, death and fire
And for ten weary weeks I kept myself alive
While around me the corpses piled higher

Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over head
And when I awoke in me hospital bed
And saw what it had done, well, I wished I was dead
Never knew there was worse things than dying

So no more I'll go Waltzing Matilda
All around the green bush far and near
To hump tent and pegs a man needs both legs
No more waltzing Matilda for me

So they gathered the wounded, the crippled, the maimed
And they shipped us back home to Australia
The armless, the legless, the blind, the insane
Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla

And when the ship pulled into Circular Quay
I looked at the place where me legs used to be
And thanked Christ there was no one there waiting for me
To grieve, and to mourn, and to pity

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
When they carried us down the gangway
But nobody cheered, they just stood there and stared
Then they turned all their faces away

So now every April I sit on my porch
And I watch the parade pass before me
I see my old comrades how proudly they march
Renewing old dreams of past glory

And the old men march slowly, all bones stiff and sore
They're tired old heroes from a forgotten war
And the young people ask, "What are they marching for?"
And I ask myself the same question

And the band plays Waltzing Matilda,
And the old men still answer the call
But year after year the numbers get fewer
Some day no one will march there at all.

(to the tune of Waltzing Matilda)

*Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
Who'll come a-Waltzing Matilda with me
And their ghosts may be heard as they march by the Billabong
Who'll come a-Waltzing Matilda with me*