

Arthur McBride



I had a first cousin called Arthur McBride,
he and I took a stroll down by the seaside
A-seeking good fortune and what might betide,
'twas just as the day was a-dawning
And then after resting we both took a tramp,
we met seargent Harper and corporal Cramp
Besides the wee drummer who beat up for camp
with his rowdy-dow-dow in the morning

“Good morning, good morning” the Sergeant did cry.”
“And the same to you gentlemen,” we did reply
Intending no harm as we meant to pass by
For it being on Christmas morning.
But says he “My fine fellows if you will enlist
It’s ten guineas in gold I will slip in your fists
And a crown in the bargain for to kick up the dust
And drink the King’s health in the morning.

For a soldier he leads a very fine life
And he always is blessed with a charming young wife,
And he pays all his debts without sorrow and strife
And always lives pleasant and charming.
And a soldier he always is decent and clean
In the finest of clothing he’s constantly seen
While other poor fellows look dirty and mean
And sup on thin gruel in the morning.”

Says Arthur, “I wouldn’t be proud of your clothes
For you’ve only the lend of them, as I suppose,
And you dare not change them one night for you know
If you do you’ll be flogged in the morning.
And although that we are single and free,
We take great delight in our own company
And we have no desire strange faces to see
Although that your offers are charming.

And we have no desire to take your advance,
All hazards and dangers we barter on chance.
For you would have no scruples for to send us to France
Where we would get shot without warning.”
“Oh no,” says the Sergeant, “I’ll have no such chat
And I neither will take it from spalpeen or brat
For if you insult me with one other word
I’ll cut off your heads in the morning.”

And then Arthur and I we soon drew our odds
And we scarce gave them time for to draw their own blades
When a trusty shillelagh came over their heads
And bade them take that as fair warning.
And their old rusty rapiers that hung by their sides
We flung them as far as we could in the tide
“Now take them out, devils,” cried Arthur McBride,
“And temper their edge in the morning.”

And the little wee drummer we flattened his pouch
And we made a football of his rowdy dow dow
Threw it in the tide for to rock and to roll
And bade it a tedious returning.
And we having no money, paid them off in cracks
And we paid no respect to their two bloody backs,
But we lathered them there like a pair of wet sacks
And left them for dead in the morning.

And so to conclude and to finish disputes
We obligingly asked if they wanted recruits,
For we were the lads who would give them hard clouts
And bid them look sharp in the morning.
Oh me and my cousin one Arthur McBride
As we went a-walking down by the seaside,
Now mark what followed and what did betide
For it being on Christmas morning.