

Arthur McBride

Rufus Wainwright

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

Out for recreation, we went on a tramp
And we met Sergeant Napper and Corporal Vamp
And a little wee drummer, intending to camp
For the day being pleasant and charming

"Good morning, good morning" the sergeant did cry
"And the same to you gentlemen" we did reply
Intending no harm but 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 fist
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 or 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 go dirty and mean
And sup on thin gruel in the morning"

But, 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 now!", 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 hods
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 side
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 pow
And we made a football of his rowdeydowdow
Threw it in the tide for to rock and to row
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
For 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

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