

# Father Tom Oneil - song lyrics

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FATHER TOM ONEIL

Sung by James Barlow.

There was a woman lived in this place, she had three charming sons;  
Their father died, and left them when they were very young;  
A long time she endeavored to maintain her darling sons, '  
Until the youngest one became a man at the age of twenty-one.

One night he discoursed with his mother, these words to her did say:  
I think it will fall on one of us to go far away;  
Your land is too small to support us all, and if you would agree,  
I am fully bent and well content a clergyman to be.

His mother being glad to hear such a thought come in his mind,  
She says : I will do all I can to help my darling child.  
She spoke unto his brothers, and they did soon agree  
They'd send him off to college, a clergyman to be.

He was not long in college when the Rev. Bishop Brown  
Came to examine the collegians, and viewed them all around.  
He saw this clever young man, marked him above them all-  
He was the first he did discourse when on them he did call.

He says: young man, where are you from\* come tell to me your name.  
I am from the County Armagh, they call me Tom O'Neil;  
My mother she is a widow of a low degree;  
She has done her best endeavors to make a priest of me.

As Thomas O'Neil, then, is your name, the bishop he did say:  
Go study hard, both night and day ;  
I will have you soon ordained, to help your mother that did so well for thee;  
I will send you home a credit, your country boys to see.

When this young man came home ordained, the neighbors were glad to hear,  
And all that came to welcome him, came in twos and threes;  
Particularly his own dear friends to welcome him they ran.  
And you never saw such welcome as was for the widow's son.

There was a man lived in this place, he was as rich as a duke or knight;  
He had an only daughter, she was a beauty bright.  
She says unto her father: I will go this young man to see,  
For before he went to college, he was a school-boy along with me,

She was brought into a parlor, where she drank ale and wine;  
She says : you are a clever young man, I would have you resign.  
What made you be a clergyman ? you know you are astray,  
For a clergyman must rise by night, and travd hard by day.

Come, take some noble lady whose fortune will be grand ;  
You will have men to wait on you, and be a gentleman.  
Come take myself now, as I stand ; you know my fortune is great  
I have ten thousand pounds a year, and, at a death, a whole estate.

He says my noble lady, do not explain your mind,  
For if you offer ten times more, I would not resign:  
For in this holy station I mean to lead my life;  
So say no more, my dearest dear, I will never take a wife.

It was when he did deny her, this villain she came home.  
And in eight weeks after, her secret she let know ;  
She swore, before the magistrate, that he did her beguile;  
And for four long weeks before she went to him, she was with child.

The morning of his trial, it grieved our hearts full sore  
To see his tender mother ; it grieved her ten times more  
To see her son, a clergyman, his age about twenty-three,  
To be cut down, in his prime, by cruel perjury.

Now, Tom, what is the reason you don't marry this fair?  
I think she is a companion for a duke, I declare ;  
What arc you but a widow's son, that is both poor and mean ?  
You might think it a great honor such a lady to obtain.

Then Father Tom stood up and said : I have no witness here,  
I call on the Almighty, and he will make me clear;  
I never said I would marry her, or make her my wife.  
For I never knew a female from a man in all my life.

Now, Tom, as you won't marry her, I will give you to understand.  
Seven long years transportation into Van Dieman's Land ;  
That is bad, but it might be worse. Then Father Tom did say :  
Our Saviour suffered more than that, when he died on calvary.

these words were hardly spoken, when a horse came as swift as wind.  
And on him came a rider, saying: I was not here in time;  
I call t hut trial over again, I am here that can reply;  
She wants two fathers for her child-that's Father Tom and I.

I can tell the very moment, likewise the very spot,  
She gave me ten thousand pounds the night the child was got.  
She said she would give me a thousand more-if I would not let on ;  
She wants to make a husband of the Right Reverend Father Tom.

Then Father Tom put on his hat, and then began to smile;  
He says unto his mother: you see how God assists your child !  
They looked on one another, when they found her perjury;  
The villain was found guilty, and his reverence came home free.