

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly

The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly
(James Joyce)

1. Have you heard of one Humpty Dumpty
How he fell with a roll and a rumble
And curled up like Lord Olofa Crumple
By the butt of the Magazine Wall

(CHORUS) Of the Magazine Wall/Hump, helmet and all?

2. He was one time our King of the Castle
Now he's kicked about like a rotten old parsnip.
And from Green Street he'll be sent by order of His Worship
To the penal jail of Mountjoy

(CHORUS) To the jail of Mountjoy!/Jail him and joy.

3. He was fafather of all schemes for to bother us
Slow coaches and immaculate contraceptives for the populace,
Mare's milk for the sick, seven dry Sundays a week,
Openair love and religion's reform,

(CHORUS) And religious reform/Hideous in form.

4. Arrah, why, says you, couldn't he manage it?
I'll go bail, me fine dairyman darling,
Like the bumping bull of the Cassidys
All your butter is in your horns

(CHORUS) His butter is in his horns./Butter his horns!

(Repeat) Hurrah there, Hosty, frosty Hosty, change that shirt on ye,
Rhyme the rann, the king of all ranns!

5. We had chaw chaw chops, chairs, chewing gum, the chicken pox and china
chambers
Universally provided by this soffsoaping salesman.
Small wonder He'll Cheat E'erawan our local lads nicknamed him
When Chimpden first took the floor

(CHORUS) With his bucketshop store/Down Bargainweg, Lower.

6. So snug he was in his hotel premises sumptuous
But soon we'll bonfire all his trash, tricks and trumpery

And 'tis short till sheriff Clancy'll be winding up his unlimited
company

With the bailiff's bom at the door

(CHORUS) Bimbam at the door/Then he'll bum no more.

7. Sweet bad luck on the waves washed to our island

The hooker of the hammerfast viking

And Gall's curse on the day when Eblana bay

Saw his black and tan man-o'-war

(CHORUS) Saw his man-o'-war/On the harbour bar.

8. Where from? roars Poolbeg. Cookingha'pence, he bawls Donnez-moi

scampitle, wick an wipin'fampiny

Fingal Mac Oscar Onesine Bargearse Boniface

Thok's min gammelhole Norveegickers moniker

Og as ay are at gammelhore Norveegickers cod.

(CHORUS) A Norwegian camel old cod./He is, begod.

Lift it, Hosty, lift it, ye devil ye! up with the rann, the rhyming
rann!

9. It was during some fresh water garden pumping

Or according to the Nursing Mirror, while admiring the monkeys

That our heavyweight heathen Humpharey

Made bold a maid to woo

(CHORUS) Woohoo, what'll she doo!/The general lost her maidenloo!

10. He ought to blush for himself, the old hayheaded philosopher

For to go and shove himself that way on top of her.

Begob, he's the crux of the catalogue

Of our antediluvial zoo

(CHORUS) Messrs. Billing and Co./Noah's larks, good as noo.

11. He was joulting by Wellington's monument

Our rotorious hippopopotamuns

When some bugger let down the backtrap of the omnibus

And he caught his death of fusiliers,

(CHORUS) With his rent in his rears./Give him six years.

12. 'Tis sore pity for his innocent poor children

But look out for his missus legitimate!

When that frew gets a grip of old Earwicker

Won't there be earwigs on the green?

(CHORUS) Big earwigs on the green,/The largest ever you seen.

Suffoclose! Shikespower! Suedodanto! Anonymoses!

13. Then we'll have a free trade Gaels' band and mass meeting
For to sod the brave son of Scandiknavery
And we'll bury him down in Oxmanstown
Along with the devil and Danes,

(CHORUS) With the deaf and dumb Danes,/And all their remains.

14. And not all the king's men nor his horses
Will resurrect his corpus
For there's no true spell in Connacht or hell

(BIS) That's able to raise a Cain.

in Finnegans Wake.

Note "perce d'oreille" is French for "earwig".

Recorded in part by the Dubliners.

JB