

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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How Paddy Stole the Rope

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THERE was once two Irish labouring men; to England they came over;
They tramped about in search of work from Liverpool to Dover.
Says Pat to Mick, "I'm tired of this; we're both left in the lurch;
And if we don't get work, bedad, I'll go and rob a church."
"What, rob a church?" says Mick to Pat; "How dare you be so vile?
There's something sure to happen as you're treading down the aisle.
But if you go I go with you; we'll get out safe, I hope;"
So, if you'll listen, I'll tell you here how Paddy stole the rope.

So off they went with theft intent, the place they wanted finding.
They broke into a country church, which nobody was minding.
They scraped together all they could and then prepared to slope,
When Paddy cries out, 'Hold on, Mick, what shall we do for rope?
We've got no bag to hold the swag, and e'er we get outside,
With something stout and strong, my lad, the bundle must be tied."
Just then he spies the old church bell, and quick as an antelope,
He scrambled up the belfry hig
Now when Paddy up the belfry got, 'Ah-hah, bedad, but stop;
To get a piece that's long enough, I must climb up to the top."
So, like a sailor, up he went, and near the top, says he,
"I think the piece that's underneath quite long enough will be."
So, holding by one arm and leg, he drew his clasp knife out,
And right above his big fat head he cut the rope so stout.
He quite forgot it held him up, and, by the Holy Pope,
Down to the bottom of the church fell Paddy and the rope.

'Come out of that," says Mick to Pat, as he on the floor lay groaning,
'If that's the way you cut a rope, no wonder now your moaning.
I'll show you how to cut a rope, so just lend me the knife."
"Be very careful," cries out Pat, "or else you'll lose your life."
He clambered up the other rope, and, like an artful thief,
Instead of cutting it above, he cut it underneath.
The piece fell down and left poor Mick alone up there to cope;
Says he, "Bad luck unto the day when we came stealing rope.'

Now with Paddy groaning on the floor and Mick
The noise soon brought the beadle round, the sexton and police,
And although they set poor Micky free, they gave them no release.
They marched them to the county jail where their conduct now they rue,
And if they'd got no work before, they've plenty now to do;
And for their ingenuity they now have larger scope
Than when they broke into a church to try and steal a rope.

LMP