

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The King of Ballyhooley

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I'll tell yez how it was with me if to listen yez are willin'
'Twas in yon house behind yon hill where I had lately been distillin'
I slung a keg upon me back and started out for daylight cooly
Good customers I did not lack and I sold it all in Ballyhooley

I thought it wiser to delay me homeward way for fear of Peelers
And in that way I spent the day dinin' with the whiskey dealers
But as the shades of night came down and I had got me money duly
I bid goodnight to all was there and I started home from Ballyhooley

My heart was light with the Mountain Dew that I had brewed among the heather
And on me way I chanced to spy a lad and lassie walk together
Her neck was like the mountain snow with cheeks like roses blossomed newly
She'd a voice like music soft and low she was the flower of Ballyhooley

This young man quickly left her side he was afraid of me that he was

Then quickly up beside her came says I fair maid I love you truly
And if your parents give consent will you be my bride in Ballyhooley

I have a house behind yon hill two fine greyhonds and a ferret
Besides I have a little still the drop it makes with you I'll share it
And I have got a feather bed with sheets and blankets purchased newly
Besides I have a ring to wed if you'll be mine in Ballyhooley

Her cherry cheeks they grew more red during the time that we were talkin'
And still she hung her little head and viewed the ground where we were walkin'
She says young man if you're content and if you say you love me truly
And if me parents give consent I'll be your bride in Ballyhooley

I asked her name she said it was Jane and that her second name was Cooley
And then I asked her when we'd wed she said the sooner wed the better
So I went and asked her parents glad if they were content to let me get her
They said they were they wished us luck we started out for Father Dooley
And at the hour of twelve o'clock he tied the knot in Ballyhooley

The Weddin' that we had that day the
The poteen flowed like a waterfall that from the still had just come newly
And in that way we gaily spent our honeymoon in Ballyhooley

The Weddin' presents that got none of them was mean or shabby
And me Auntie Dot she bought some cloth to make the dresses for the baby

Invitations then went round to friends that we had just made newly
A lighter heart could not be found that mine that night in Ballyhooley

It's fifteen years now since we wed still in every way we're thrivin'
Me Jane she is a dandy yet though down the hill of life she's drivin'
The family has increased in store fifteen daughters all unruly
Bonny Jane she is me Queen and I'm the king of Ballyhooley.

note: Sung by Patrick Street on "Irish Times"

Heard on the radio many years ago, sung by a man from Donegal in
which country this particular Ballyhooley is situated. I am greatly
indebted to an old friend, Johnny Moynihan, who is largely responsible
for the song's current shape. WH

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