

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Major Andrews' Execution

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Come, all you bold Americans, I pray you now draw near
I'll sing you a small ditty your spirits for to cheer,
Concerning a young gentleman whose age was twenty two:
He fought for North America; his heart was just and true.

They took him from his dwelling place, and then did him confine,
They cast him into prison, and kept him for some time;
But he, being bold and valiant, resolved not there to stay;
He set himself at liberty, and then he ran away.

Then this young man returned, 'twas to his country's joy,
For there was great contrivance America to destroy,
Contrived by General Arnold and England's British crew;
They strove for to sited innocent blood America to undo.

There was a scouting party as low as Derry town
And seeing there a gentleman who appeared of high renown.
Then up stepped this bold Palding, which (was) the young man's name;
"Tell me where you are going, to tell me from whence you came."

"I am of the British lines, sir, I am of the British came,
And you may trust unto me the wars they are allner; (meaning obscure)
I am of the British lines, sir? I have a pass to go my way,
I am on an expedition, I have no time to stay."

"Oh, all you must dismount, sir. and give a strict account.
For all that you can say to me will be of no amount.
For I will have you searched before you do pass by;"
On strict examination they found he was a spy.

"Here, take my gold and silver that I have now in store,
And when I get into New York, I'll give you as much more."
"I want none of your gold and silver, for I've enough in store,
And when my money is spent and gone, I'll boldly fight for more.

"I am a brisk stallion with courage stout and bold,
I fear the face on no man though he be clothed with gold;
Our time it is our property our courage for to try,
We will unsheathe our glittering swords, one of us two must die."

When Major Andrew saw that death it was his lot,
He asked for pen and paper, and begged leave for to, write,

To write to General Arnold to inform him of his fate;
He asked for some assistance, but oh, it was too late.

When General Arnold read those lines. it put him in a fret
The tears they run down till his eyes and cheeks they were wet.
And now the traitor Arnold is fighting for his king.
And left poor Major Andrew on the gallows for to swing.

When Andrew was executed he was both meek and mild:
He looked on his spectators and pleasantly he smiled,
Which caused our generals to fall back and made their hearts to bleed;
They wished poor Major Andrew clear, and Arnold in his stead.

DT #754

Laws A2

From Eddy, Ballads and Songs from Ohio

Collected from Mrs. C.C. Waltenbaugh of Canton, Ohio from her
grandfather's copybook from 1822. Major Andre was in the British
army and assigned to meet with Benedict Arnold when he was taken
and hanged.

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