

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Mary and the Soldier

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Come all you lads of high renown that will hear of a fair young maiden
And she roved out on a summer's day for to view the soldier's parading

They march so bold and they look so gay
The colours fine and the bands did play
And it caused young Mary for to say
"I'll wed you me gallant soldier"

She viewed the soldiers on parade and as they stood at their leisure
And Mary to herself did say: "At last I find my treasure

But oh how cruel my parents must be
To banish my true love away from me
Well I'll leave them all and I'll go with thee
Me bold and undaunted soldier"

"Oh Mary dear, your parents' love I pray don't be unruly
For when you're in a foreign land, believe you rue it surely

Perhaps in battle I might fall
From a shot from an angry cannonball
And you're so far from your daddy's hall
Be advised by a gallant soldier."

"Oh I have fifty guineas in right gold, likewise a hearth that's burning
And I'd leave them all and I'd go with you me bold undaunted soldier

So don't say no but let me go
And I will face the daring foe
And we'll march together to and fro
And I'll wed you, my gallant soldier"

And when he saw her loyalty and Mary so true-hearted
He said: "Me darling, married we'll be and nothing but death will part us

And when we're in a foreign land
I'll guard you, darling, with my right hand
And hopes that God might stand a friend
With Mary and her gallant soldier"

"It's the old story of the soldier heading for the wars and leaving the girl behind him. In some ballads she dressed herself up in men's clothing and went along with him. Numerous too are the songs about the female sailors and female soldiers. More often than not she went along as the pretty drummer boy or the pretty cabin boy. In this particular song, he is so impressed by her loyalty, that he marries her before he goes away."

MJ