

The Saint Patrick Battalion
By:David Rovics

My name is John Riley.
I'll have your ear only a while.
I left my dear home in Ireland.
It was death, starvation, or exile.
And when I got to America,
It was my duty to go
Enter the army and slog across Texas
To join in the war against Mexico.

It was there in the pueblos and hillsides
That I saw the mistake I had made:
Part of a conquering army
With the morals of a bayonet blade.
So, in the midst of these poor, dying Catholics,
Screaming children, the burning stench of it all,
I myself and two-hundred Irishmen
Decided to answer the call.

From Dublin City to San Diego,
We witnessed freedom denied;
So, we formed the Saint Patrick's Battalion,
And we fought on the Mexican side.

We marched 'neath the green flag of Saint Patrick,
Emblazoned with "Erin Go Bragh,"
Bright with the harp and the shamrock
And "Libertad a la Republica."
Just fifty years after Wolftone,
Five-thousand miles away,
The Yanks called us a "Legion of Strangers,"
And they can talk as they may.

From Dublin City to San Diego,
We witnessed freedom denied;
So, we formed the Saint Patrick's Battalion,
And we fought on the Mexican side.

We fought them in Matamoros,
While their volunteers were raping the nuns.
In Monterrey and Cerro Gordo,
We fought on as Ireland's sons.
We were the red-headed fighters for freedom,
Amidst these brown-skinned women and men.
Side by side, we fought against tyranny,
And I daresay we'd do it again.

From Dublin City to San Diego,
We witnessed freedom denied;
So, we formed the Saint Patrick's Battalion,
And we fought on the Mexican side.

We fought them in five major battles.
Churobusco was the last.
Overwhelmed by the cannons from Boston,
We fell after each mortar blast.
Most of us died on that hillside
An the service of the Mexican state.
So far from our occupied homeland,
We were heroes and victims of fate.

From Dublin City to San Diego,
We witnessed freedom denied;
So, we formed the Saint Patrick's Battalion,
And we fought on the Mexican side.

