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The Fenians' Escape

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Now boys, if you will listen, a story I'll relate
I'll tell you of the noble men who from their foe escaped.
Though bound with Saxon fetters in the dark Australian jail,
They struck a blow for freedom and for Yankeeland set sail.

On the seventeenth of April last the Stars and Stripes did fly
On board the bark Catalpa, waving proudly to the sky;
She showed the green above the red as she did calmly lay
Prepared to take the Fenian boys in safety o'er the sea.

When Breslin and brave Desmond brought the prisoners to the shore,
They gave one shout for freedom; soon to bless them evermore.
And manned by gallant Irish hearts, pulled towards the Yankee shore,
For well they knew, from its proud folds, no tyrant could them drag.

They had nearly reached in safety the Catalpa taut and trim,
When fast approaching them they saw a vision dark and dim.
It was the gunboat Georgette, and on her deck there stood,
One hundred hired assassins, to shed each patriot's blood.

The gunboat reached the bounding bark and fired across her bow,
Then in loud voice commanded that the vessel should heave to.
But noble Captain Anthony in thunder tones did cry,
"You dare not fire a shot at that bright flag that floats on high."

"My ship is sailing peacefully beneath that flag of stars,
It's manned by Irish hearts of oak and manly Yankee tars;
And that dear emblem near the fore, so plain to be seen,
Is is the banner I'll protect, old Ireland's flag of green."

The Britisher he sailed away, from the Stars and Stripes he ran,
He knew his chance was slim to fight the boys of Uncle Sam;
So Hogan, Wilson, Harrington, with Darragh off did go;
With Hassett and bold Cranston, soon to whip the Saxon foe.

Here's luck to Captain Anthony who well these men did free,
He dared the English man-o'-war to fight him on the sea;
And here's to that dear emblem which in triumph shall be seen
The flag for which our heroes fought, old Ireland's flag of green.

From Songs of the Irish in America, Meek