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George Reilly (6)

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It was on a summer morning, the weather being fair
I strolled for recreation down by the river clear
I overheard a fair one most grievously complain
All for an absent lover that ploughed the raging main.

I being unperceiv-ed unto her I drew near
But kept myself in ambush that better I might hear,
With bitter lamentation and melancholy cries,
Sparkling tears like jewels came streaming from her eyes.

I step-ped up unto her and thus addressed the fair,
Saying, "My sweet and lovely fair one, why are you weeping here?"
"O for an absent lover, the fair one did reply
WHich makes for me to moan and to lament and cry."

"Perhaps his mind was altered and changed some other way?
O can you never forget him and place your mind on me?"
"O no," said the fair one, "that can never be
Till death shall separate us, I'll wed no one but he."

"O tell to me, my dearest dear, what was your true love's name?
Both that and his description, I'd like to know the same."
"George Reilly I did call him, and he were both neat and trim
So manly in deportment that few can excel him."

"I had a jolly messmate, and Reilly was his name
I think from your description that he must be the same;
Five months we were together on board the old ____ (on board a man o' war)
And such a jolly messmate I never had before."

"On June the twenty-second we had a bloody fray
From early in the morning it lasted all that day;
'Twas on the water-deck (quarter deck) a many brave man did fall
George Reilly fell a victim to a French cannon-ball."

note: sort of stops short. RG

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