

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

M'Ginty's Meal and Ale

(alternate:)

M'Ginty's Meal and Ale

This is nae a sang o' love, na, nor yet a sang o' mon-ey,
It's nae-thing ve-ry pee-ty-fu', an' nae-thing ve-ry fun-ny;
But there's Heelan' Scotch, Lowlan' Scotch, Butter Scotch an' hon-ey;
If there's nane o' them for a' there's a mix-ter o' the three.

An' there's nae a word o' beef-brose, so-wens sau-tie ban-nocks na';
Nor pan-cakes an' pess eggs for them wi' dain-ty stam-macks;
It's a' a-boot a meal-an'-ale that hap-pen't at Bal-man- nocks,
M'-Gin-ty's meal-an'-ale far the pig gaed there to see.

CHORUS:

They were howl-in'in the kit-chen like a car-a-van o' Tin-kies, aye,
An' some wis play-in' ping-pong, an' tidd-l-ey widd-l-ey win-kies;
Up the howe or doon the howe there ne-ver wis sic jin-kies,
As M'-Gin-ty's meal-an'-ale, whaur the pig gaed on the spree.

M'Ginty's pig had broken lowse, an' wan'ert tae the lobby,
Far he open shiv't the pantry door, an' cam' upo' the toddy,
An' he gaed kin'ly tae the stuff, like ony human body,
At M'Ginty's meal-an'-ale far the pig gaed there tae see.
Miss M'Ginty she ran butt the hoose, the road wis dark an' crookit,
She fell heelster-gowdy ower the pig, for it she never lookit,
An' she leet oot a skyrl wid a' paralyst a teuchit,
At M'-Gin-ty's meal-an'-ale, far the pig gaed there tae see.

CHORUS

Young Murphy he ran aifter her, an' ower the pig wis leapin',
But he trampit on an ashet that wis sittin' fu' o' dreepin',
An' he fell doon an' peel't his croon, an' coouldna haud fae greetin
At M'Ginty's meal-an'-ale far the pig gaed there te see.
For the pantry skyelf cam' ricklin' doon, an' he wis lyin' kirnin'
Amon' saft soap, piz-meal, corn floor, an' yirnin',
Like a gollach amon' tricle, but M'Ginty's wife wis girnin'
At the soss upon her pantry fleer, an' widna' lat 'im be.

CHORUS

Syne they a' ran skyrlin' tae the door, bit fan that it wis tuggit,
For aye it heeld the faister aye the mair they ruggit;
Tull M'Ginty roar't tae bring an aix, he widna be humbuggit,
Na, nor lockit in his ain hoose, an' that he'd lat them see.
Sae the wife cam' trailin' wi' an aix, an' throu' the bar wis hacket,
An' open flew the door at aince, sae close as they war packet,
An' a' the crew gaed tum'lin' oot like tatties fae a bucket,
At McGinty's meal-an'-ale far the pig gaed there tae see.

CHORUS

They hid spurtles, they hid tatie chappers, troth they warn' jokin',
An' they said they'd gar the pig claw far he wis never yokin';
Bit be this time the lad wis fou an' didna care a dokin,
At M'Ginty's meal-an'-ale far the pig gaerd there tae see.
O there's eely pigs, an' jeely pigs, an' pigs for haudin' butter,
Aye, bit this pig wis greetin' fou an' tum'lin' in the gutter,
Tull M'Ginty' an' his foreman trail't 'im oot upon a shutter
Fae M'Ginty's meal-an'-ale, far the pig gaed there tae see.

CHORUS

Miss M'Ginty took the thing tae he'rt an' hidet in her closet,
An' they rubbit Johnny Murphy's heed wi' turpenteen an' roset,
An' they harl't him wi' meal an' ale, ye really wid suppose't
He hid sleepit in a mason's troch, an' risen tae the spree.
O weary on the barley bree, an' weary fa' the widder;
For it's keegerin' amon' the dubs an' drink they gyang na weel thegidder,
But there's little doot M'Ginty's pig is wishin' for anidder
O' M'Ginty's meal-an' ales far the pig gaed there tae see.

CHORUS:

They were howlin' in the kitchen like a caravan o' Tinkies, aye,
An' some wis playin' ping-pong, an' tiddley widdley winkies;
Up the howe or doon the howe there never wis sic jinkies,
As M'Ginty's meal-an'-ale, whaur the pig gaed on the spree.

Written by George Bruce Thompson and submitted to Grieg's column in the Buchan Obsever about 1910. It seems to have gone instantly into tradition, especially in the Stewart family of Aberdeanshire.

I regret the sing-song nature of the music as it comes out in this case. In spite of the silliness and pace of the song, it should have much more character, individualization and dramatization than this transcription allows.

A small note. The language is pure rustic North-East (Scotland)

countryside. As time went on, the spelling and a number of words tended to become, not modern or urban Scottish, but rather towards Ballad-Scots. For all of that, there's little change except for the refrain. In that, I've followed my daughter's instructions and retained Davy Stewart's usage in the chorus but the original in the verse. I'm not so familiar with modern rustic or with bothy songs as with classic ballad but this is the only use I've come across of heelster-gowdy (heels akimbo...head over heels) other than Freedom Co Grieg notes of Thompson that although local to New Deer, his songs had spread to quite a distance and people had already begun sending examples of them to Grieg as native to other areas altogether.

`To hear them sung by the author himself is a memorable treat. We have known such a performance break all local records in the matter of bringing a house down.'

When I heard Davy Stewart sing this at Blairgowrie, he was elderly, singing a dialect song in one of the world's broadest accents, and seriously betippled (like everyone else in town that day.) I venture to say few in the room understood more than a few words. I didn't get _any_ words that first time; or even the sense that the language was in the Indo-European family. For all of that, he too brought the house down. It was great! AJS

Tune: Roxburgh Castle, adapted and, claims Mr Thompson, ruined.