

Dubliners, The "McAlpine's Fusiliers"

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Spoken:

'Twas in the year of 'thirty-nine when the sky was full of
lead

When Hitler was heading for Poland, and Paddy for
Holyhead

Come all you pincher laddies and you long-distance
men

Don't ever work for McAlpine, for Wimpey, or John Laing
You'll stand behind a mixer until your skin is turned to
tan

And they'll say, Good on you, Paddy, with your boat
fare in your hand

Oh, the craic was good in Cricklewood and they
wouldn't leave the Crown

With glasses flying and Biddys crying 'cause Paddy
was going to town

Oh mother dear, I'm over here and I'm never coming
back

What keeps me here is the reek o' beer, the ladies and
the craic

I come from county Kerry, the land of eggs and bacon
And if you think I'll eat your fish and chips,
oh dear, then you're mistaken...

Break out singing:

As down the glen came McAlpine's men

With their shovels slung behind them

It was in the pub that they drank their sub

Or down in the spike you'll find them

We sweated blood and we washed down mud

With quarts and pints of beer

But now we're on the road again with McAlpine's
Fusiliers

I stripped to the skin with Darky Finn

Way down upon the Isle of Grain

With Horseface Toole I learned the rule

No money if you stop for rain

For McAlpine's god is a well filled hod

Your shoulders cut to bits and seared

And woe to he who looks for tea with McAlpine's

Fusiliers

I remember the day that the Bear O'Shea
Fell into a concrete stairs
What Horseface said, when he saw him dead,
Well it wasn't what the rich call prayers
"I'm a navvy short," was his one retort
That reached unto my ears
When the going is rough, well you must be tough, with
McAlpine's Fusiliers

I've worked till the sweat near had me bet
With Russian, Czech and Pole
At shuttering jams up in the Hydro Dams
or underneath the Thames in a hole
I grafted hard and I got me cards
and many a ganger's fist across me ears
If you pride your life, don't join, by Christ, with
McAlpine's Fusiliers!

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