

Irish Folksongs

"AND THE BAND PLAYED WALTZING MATILDA"

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When I was a young man, I carried my pack
And I lived the free life of a rover
From the Murray's green basin to the dusty outback
I waltzed my matilda all over
Then in nineteen fifteen, my country said, "Son
It's time to stop ramblin' for there's work to be done"
So they gave me a tin hat, and they gave me a gun
And they sent me away to the war

Chorus:

And the band played "Waltzing Matilda"
As the ship sailed away from the quay
Amid all the tears, the flag-waving and cheers
We sailed off for Gallipoli

How well I remember that terrible day
When our blood stained the sand and the water
And how in that hell that they call Suvla Bay
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter
Johnny Turk was ready, Lord he primed himself well
He rained us with bullets and he showered us with
shells
In five minutes flat, we were all blown to hell
Nearly blew us back home to Australia

Chorus:

And the band played "Waltzing Matilda"
As we stopped to bury our slain
We buried ours and the Turks buried theirs
Then it started all over again

And those who were living just tried to survive
In that mad world of blood, death and, fire
For ten weary weeks, I kept myself alive
While around me the corpses piled higher
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me ass over head
And when I awoke, in a hospital bed
And saw what it had done, I wished I were dead
I never knew there were worse things than dying

Chorus:

For no more I'll go waltzing matilda
All around the green bush far and near
But to hunt and to pace, a man needs both legs
No more waltzing matilda for me

They collected the wounded, the crippled, the maimed
And they shipped us

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