

Irish Folksongs

"ARTHUR McBRIDE"

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I had a first cousin called Arthur McBride
and we went a-walking down by the seaside
Seeking good fortune and what might betide
for it being on Christmas morning

For recreation we went on a tramp
where we met Sergeant Harper and Corporal Crump
And a little wee drummer intending to camp
for the day being pleasant and charming
"Good morning, good morning" the sergeant did cry
"And the same to you gentlemen" we did reply
Intending no harm, we made to pass by
For it being on Christmas mornin'

Says he, "My fine fellows, if you will enlist
it's ten guineas I quickly will shove in your fist
And a crown in the bargain to kick off the dust
and to drink the king's health in the morning
For a soldier he leads a very fine life
and he always is blessed with a pretty young wife
And he pays all his debts without worry or strife
and always is pleasant and charming

And a soldier, he always is decent and clean
in the finest of clothes he is constantly seen
While other poor fellows are dirty and mean
and sup on thin gruel in the morning"

But says Arthur, I wouldn't be proud of your clothes
for you've only the lend of them, as I suppose
And you dare not remove them at night
for you know if you do, you'll be flogged in the morning

And although that we are single and free
we take great delight in our own company
And we have no desire strange faces to see
although your offers are charming
And we have no desire to take your advance
of hazards and dangers we'll barter our chance
For you have no scruples and will send us to France
where we'll surely be shot without warning

Oh now, says the sergeant, if I hear one more word
I instantly then will draw

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