

Irish Folksongs

"BACK HOME IN DERRY"

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In 1803 we sailed out to sea
Out from the sweet town of Derry
For Australia bound if we didn't all drown
And the marks of our fetters we carried
In rusty iron chains we sighed for our wains
Our good women we left in sorrow
As the mainsails unfurled, our curses we hurled
On the English, and thoughts of tomorrow

Chorus:

Oh..... I wish I was back home in Derry
Oh..... I wish I was back home in Derry

At the mouth of the Foyle, bid farewell to the soil
As down below decks we were lying
O'Doherty screamed, woken out of a dream
By a vision of bold Robert dying
The sun burned cruel as we dished out the gruel
Dan O'Connor was down with a fever
Sixty rebels today bound for Botany Bay
How many will meet their receiver

I cursed them to hell as her bow fought the swell
Our ship danced like a moth in the firelight
White horses rode high as the devil passed by
Taking souls to Hades by twilight
Five weeks out to sea, we were now forty-three
Our comrades we buried each morning
And in our own slime we were lost in a time
Of endless nights without dawning

Van Diemen's land is a hell for a man
To live out his whole life in slavery
Where the climate is raw and the gun makes the law
Neither wind nor rain care for bravery
Twenty years have gone by, I've ended my bond
My comrades ghosts walk behind me
A rebel I came - I'm still the same
On the cold winters night you will find me

