

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Castlebar

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It being on a sultry summer day and I weary working at the hay,
I lay to watch a regiment march by to England's war.
I don't know what then came about, but I must have slept without a doubt
For I dreamt I took the shilling in the town of Castlebar.

Oh what will my dear parents say when they hear the latest news today,
How another Irish boy has strayed gone fighting England's war?
My father it will surely kill, my mother too will cry her fill
When they hear their son against their will is leaving Castlebar.

'Oh, then Sergeant Shea a mhic mo chrom, won't you swop back again with me
For my old coat and britches they were warmer by far.
Your khaki suit is nice I know, but here it is and let me go
For I'd rather dress in an Irish tweed at home in Castlebar.'

The sergeant he said back to me 'You might as well contented be
You know you took the shilling free in Mary Haughey's bar
And your old friends you leave behind, they might as well make up their mind
That you'll never more see Erin's shore, you're leaving Castlebar.'

It was then I wept with grief and pain, but all my protest was in vain,
They marched me off to Navan with some General in a car
And when we came to Dublin town, straight to the transport we went down -
We sailed away for India, my sorrow Castlebar.

The heat was dreadful overhead, we fought till nearly all were dead
From Suttlee to the Khyber till we came to Kandahar.
Those Indians were a hardy lot, they whacked it to us hard and hot,
I lost a leg to cannon-shot and I wept for Castlebar.

As on the bloody ground I lay, in deep despair I couldn't pray
I cursed the day I went away and my joy in life did mar,
When someone near me let a shout, I woke right up and gazed about;
Thank God it was a nightmare I was safe in Castlebar.

I gazed about me with delight, I found my two fine legs alright,
I kissed the sod of Ireland and I thanked my lucky star.
I swore no soldiering I'd try unless for Ireland's cause I'd die,
King George can suck his shilling I'm content in Castlebar.

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