

Arthur McBride (New Recording)

Paul Brady

Oh me and my cousin, one Arthur McBride
As we went a walkin' down by the seaside
Now mark what followed and what did betide
It being on Christmas morning

Out for recreation we went on a tramp
And we met Sergeant Knacker and Corporal Cramp (or Vamp)
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 but meant to pass by
For it being on Christmas morning

But says he my fine fellows if you will enlist
It's ten guineas in gold I will slip in your fist
And a crown in the bargain for to kick up the dust
And to drink the King's health in the morning

For a soldier he leads a very fine life
He always is blessed with a charming young wife
And he pays all his debts without sorrow or strife
And always lives happy and charming

And a soldier he always is decent and clean
In the finest of clothing he's constantly seen
While other poor fellows go dirty and mean
And sup on thin gruel in the morning

Says Arthur, I wouldn't be proud of your clothes
You've only the lend of them as I suppose
And you dare not change them one night or you know
If you do you'll be flogged in the morning

And although we are single and free
We take great delight in our own company
And we have no desire strange places to see
Although your offer is charming

And we have no desire to take your advance
All hazards and danger we barter on chance
and you'd have no scruples to send us to France
Where we would be shot without warning

And now says the sergeant, I'll have no such chat
And I neither will take it from spalpeen or brat
For if you insult me with one other word
I'll cut off your heads in the morning

And then Arthur and I we soon drew our hods?
And we scarce gave them time for to draw their own blades
When a trusty shillelagh came over their heads
And bade them take that as fair warning

As for their old rusty rapiers that hung by their sides
We flung it as far as we could in the tide
To the Devil I pitch you, says Arthur McBride
To temper your steel in the morning

As for the wee drummer, we rifled his pow
And made a football of his row-do-dow-dow
Into the tide to rock and to roll
And bade it a tedious returnin'

And we haven't no money to pay them off in cracks
And we paid no respect to the two bloody backs
For we lathered them there like a pair of wet sacks
And left them for dead in the morning

And so to conclude and to finish disputes
We obligingly asked if they wanted recruits
For we were the lads who would give them hard clouts
And bid them look sharp in the morning

Oh me and my cousin, one Arthur McBride
As we went a walkin' down by the seaside
Now mark what followed and what did betide
It being on Christmas morning

After many years of evolution, Andy Irvine sings the first few verses slightly differently:

I had a first cousin called Arthur McBride
He and I took a stroll down by the seaside;
Seeking good fortune and what might betide

It was just as the day was a'dawnin'

After restin' we both took a tramp
We met Sergeant Harper and Corporal Cramp
Besides the wee drummer who beat up the camp
With his row-dee-dow-dow in the morning

He says my young fellows if you will enlist
A guinea you quickly will have in your fist
Besides a crown for to kick up the dust
And drink the King's health in the morning

(the rest is the same)

Lyrics submitted by Agnes.

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