



The Galbally Farmer

One evening of late as I chanced for to stray,
The town of Tipperary I struck on my way,
For the praties to dig and to work by the day,
I hired with a Galbally farmer.

The hire that was going, a shilling a day,
I took it, I own, tho' shameful to say,
No mention of grub - nor even of tay -
Or a drink for the road from my hirer.

His name was O'Leary, a man hard and mean,
With the face of a miser, mangy and lean;
I was soon made aware of the fool I had been
To hire with that Galbally farmer.

Now Darby was scraggy and wore a hard hat,
I gazed at his get-up but he gave me no chat;
His eyes, altho' bleary, could see like a cat,
When watching a poor spailpin fanach.

Said the crabby ould caffler as he mounted his steed:
"To the Galbally mountains we're posting with speed."
My feelings, don't doubt it, were gloomy indeed,
As I struck at a trot out behind him.

Before leaving the town 'twas painful to see
How he acted the clown on his shaggy stageen,
He tore up the street on its head at full speed,
To show off his antics on horseback.

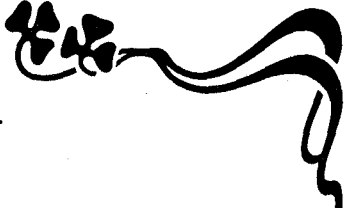
What a sight was O'Leary and the garran he rode,
Going through Tipperary in his claw-hammer coat;
Tho' my feelings were dreary and heavy my load,
I couldn't but laugh at the ould codger.

I followed the lead of the daft angishoir,
As he capered and wheeled up wild Galteemore -
No need to reveal the kind feelings I bore
Towards generous Darby O'Leary.

The way that he took wound south on the dale,
Below Sliabh na Mac thro' a green flowery vale;
How glorious it looked, were one in the vein
To enjoy all its beauty so charming!

The road it got steep, and was full of rough stones
That scalded my feet and rattled my bones;
The pain grew severe - how I suffered, mo bhron!
Trudging that night towards Barna.

I asked at the Gap how far we'd to go -
The night it got dark, and my steps became slow -
I was hungry and tired and my spirits were low,
How I needed a drop to revive me!



He told me the distance from there to his place -
As he sat on his nag, a scowl on his face -
Would be less than it was, had I kept the pace
That he set for me leaving Tipperary.

He loosened the reins and gave head to his steed,
And I, altho' lame, had to follow his lead;
'Twas vain to complain, he paid me no heed,
Or cared how I dragged on behind him.

When we came to his house, I looked at it first,
It seemed like the ruins of an ould preaching church.
Oh, cruel was my fate, I was left in the lurch,
In the clutches of Darby O'Leary.

'Tis well I remember, 'twas Michaelmas night,
To a hearty good supper he did me invite -
Bad spuds and sour milk that would physic a snipe,
Or give you the woeful disorder.

The niggardly rascal looked on with a frown,
While I was admiring my shabby shake-down,
A tick of wet chaff, all dirty and brown,
And a quilt since the time of the Damer.

I was tired and distressed from my long and hard tramp,
And found when undressed a bed worse than damp;
I'd no hope of a sleep for it seemed the ould scamp
Kept the fleas in his doss in starvation.

The following morning before the daylight,
I was roused up by Darby, all flurry and fright,
Had to weed his big garden, till late into night,
When even the ghosts had been quartered!

From work without cease and food that was bad,
When the darkness came on, I was weary and sad,
Parched for a deoch, I touched the old lad,
But as well look for down on a badger.

'Twas early next morning I opened my cell,
And left without warning this happy hotel;
His praties and blathach I pitched them to hell -
And likewise kind Darby O'Leary.

I worked in Kilcommon, I worked in Kenmore,
I worked in Knockcarron and Soloheadmore,
Nicker, Rathcannon and Boheranore
With dacent respectable people.

I worked in Tipperary, the Rag and Rosgreen,
The moat of Kilfeacle, and the bridge of Aleen,
But such cruel tribulations I never have seen
As I got from that Galbally farmer.

And now it is time for to finish my song;
I hope that the reign of his breed be soon gone,
So, here's to that day - for it won't be too long -
And bad cess to you Darby O'Leary!

Darby Ryan

