

Irish Song Lyrics

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THE REGULAR ARMY, OH
(Harrington and Hart)

Three years ago, this very day, I went to Govner's Isle
To stand ferinst the cannon in true military style,
Thirteen American Dollars each month we surely get,
To carry a gun and a bayonet with a military step.

cho: There's Sergeant John McCafferty and Corp'ral Donahue
They make us march up to the crack in gallant Company Q;
The drums they roll, upon my soul, for that's the way we go
Forty miles a day on beans and hay in the Regular Army, Oh.

We had our choice of going to the army or to jail,
Or it's up the Hudson River with a cop to take a sail;
So we puckered up our courage and with bravery we did go
And we cursed the day we marched away with the Regular Army, Oh!

The captain's name was Murphy, of "dacint French descint"
Sure he knew all the holy words in the Hebrew testament;
And when he said to Hogan: "Just move your feet a foot,"
Sure, Hogan jumped a half a mile on Sergeant Riley's boot.

The best of all the officers is Second Lieutenant McDuff;
Of smoking cigarettes and sleep he never got enough.
Says the captain, "All we want of you is to go to Reveille,
And we'll let the first sergeant run the company."

There's corns upon me feet, me boy, and bunions on me toes,
And lugging a gun in the red hot sun puts freckles on me nose
And if you want a furlough to the captain you do go,
And he says, "Go to bed and wait till you're dead in the Regular
Army, Oh"

We went to Arizona for to fight the Indians there;
We were nearly caught bald-headed but they didn't get our hair
We lay among the ditches in the dirty yellow mud,
And we never saw an onion, a turnip or a spud.

We were captured by the Indians and brought ferinst the chafe
Says he, "We'll have an Irish stew," the dirty Indian thafe.
On the telegraphic wire we skipped to Mexico,
And we blessed the day we marched away from the Regular Army, Oh!

Note: A post-Civil-War Music hall comment on the professional, or
all-volunteer Army that replaced the citizen's Grand Army of
the Republic at the end of the war. It proved to be a home to
many Irish immigrants. The song was picked up by the army,
and was a popular army song in the late 1800s. RG

From Humor in American Song, Loesser