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The Bold Belfast Shoemaker

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Come all you true born Irishmen wherever you may be
I hope you'll pay attention and listen unto me
I am a bold shoemaker, Sam Irwin is my name
And to my great misfortune I enlisted in the train

I had a fair young sweetheart, Jane Wilkin was her name
She said it grieved her heart full sore to see me in the train
She told me if I would desert to come and let her know
She would dress me up in her old clothes that I might go to and fro

We marched to Chapelizod like heroes stout and bold
I'll be no more a slave to you my officer I told
For to work upon a Sunday with me does not agree
And the first chance that occurs to me, I'll take my liberty

Encamped near Tipperary we soon got in command
For me and for me comrades bold one night on guard did stand
The night it being both wet and dark and so we did agree
That on that very night brave boys we'd take our liberty

The night that I deserted I had no place to go
I went into meadow and lay down in the hay
It was not long that I lay there till I awake again
And looking all around me, boys, I spied six of the train

We had a bloody battle and soon I beat them all
And loud the dastard cowards for mercy then did call
Saying spare our lives brave Irwin and we will follow thee
And by all that's fair we will declare for you and liberty

As for George Clarke of Carrick I own he's very mean
For the sake of thirty shillings he had me took again
They threw me in the guard house, me fate for to deplore
With four on every window, boys, and six on every door

On being in close confinement, I soon looked all around
I climbed out of a window and knocked four of them down
The light horse and the train me boys, they soon did follow me
But I kept me road before them and preserved my liberty

I next joined Father Murphy as you will plainly hear

And many's the battle did we fight with his brave Shelmaliers
With four hundred of his croppy boys we battered Lord Mountjoy
And at the battle of New Ross we made ten thousand fly

I am a bold shoemaker, Sam Irwin is my name
I could beat as many Orangemen as 'listed in the train
I could beat as many Orangemen as would stand in a row
I'd make them fly before me like an arrow from a bow.

Given in O'Lochlainn's "Irish Street Ballads".

MR

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