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The Rambler From Clare

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The first of my courtship that ever was known,
I straight took my way to the County Tyrone;
Where among the pretty fair maids they used me well there
And they called me the stranger, and the Rambler from Clare.

'Twas then I enlisted in the town of Fermoy
But with so many masters I could not comply,
I deserted next morning, the truth I declare
And for Limerick town started the Rambler from Clare.

I then took my way to the town of Tralee
Where I fell a-courting young Sally Magee
I first gained her favor and then left her there
So now they're in search of the Rambler from Clare.

When like a deserter my case to bewail
I was captured and taken in the town of Rathkale;
Then off to headquarters I had to repair
And in the Black Hole lay the Rambler from Clare.

I took off my hat and I made a low bow,
In hopes that the Colonel would pardon me now,
The pardon he gave me was hard and severe
'Twas "Bind him! Confine him! He's the Rambler from Clare."

My poor innocent mother got a woeful surprise
And my loving brother his shouts reaced the skies.
"Brave boys," said my father, "Your arms now prepare
To bring me my darling, the Rambler from Clare."

'Twas then we assembled in harmonious band (throng)
With our guns on our shoulders, we were ten thousand strong,
The firing began with our boys in the rear
We broke the gaol doors and took the Rambler from Clare.

We marched along then through the Barony of Forth
Where some of our heroes lay in camp before
The firing began, and I can't tell you where
But our chief commander was the Rambler from Clare.

Now that I've got the title of a United man

I cannot stay home in my own native land
So off to America I must quickly repair
And leave all my friends in the sweet County Clare.

Farewell to my comrades wherever they be
Likewise to my sweetheart, young Sally Magee
Our ship she is ready and the wind it blows fair
He is gone, God be with him, the Rambler from Clare.

From More Irish Street Ballads, O Lochlainn

Note: One of the songs in Joyce's pamphlet, Irish Peasant
Songs, 1912. ..It seems to be a genuine United Irishmen
ballad dating from 1798. COL