

## TEN GUNINEAS IN GOLD I WILL SLIP IN YOUR FIST

We could consider this a 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-war song. It was first collected around 1840 in Limerick by Patrick Weston Joyce. Many traditional songs tell of aggressive recruitment tactics and paying the king's gold or getting young men drunk to get them to enlist. I haven't previously seen one where the would-be "recruits" take matters into their own hands quite as forcefully as Arthur McBride and his cousin.

### ARTHUR MCBRIDE

**C** **F** **C** **G**  
Oh me and me cousin one Arthur McBride as we went a' walkin' down by the seaside  
**C** **F** **C** **G**  
We met Sergeant Harper and Corporal Pride – just as the mornin' was dawnin' –  
**C** **F** **C** **G** **C** **G**  
"Good mornin', good mornin'," the sergeant did cry. "And the same to you gentlemen" we did reply  
**C** **F** **C** **G** **C**  
Intending no harm, we just meant to pass by – the day bein' pleasant and charmin'

Well, says he me fine fellows if you will enlist, it's ten guineas in gold I will slip in your fist.  
I'll throw in a crown for to kick up the dust and to drink the King's health in the mornin'.  
For a soldier, he leads a very fine life, and he always is blessed with a charming young wife  
While other poor fellows have sorrow and strife, and sup on thin gruel in the mornin'.

Well, says Arthur, "I wouldn't be proud of yer clothes, for you only lend out them now I suppose  
And dare not change them one mite if you dare – for you know you'd be flogged in the mornin'.  
And we have no desire to take your advance, for with all of the dangers we'd not take the chance  
And you'd have no scruples to send us to France where you know we'd be shot in the mornin'

"Oh no," says the sergeant, "If I hear one more word, I quickly right now will draw out me sword  
And into your bodies as strength will afford, so now, me young devils, take warning."  
For Arthur and I, we counted the odds, and we scarce give 'em time to draw their own blades  
With our trusty shillelaghs we bashed in their heads, and paid 'em right smart in the morning'.

And the rusty old rapiers that hung by their sides, we flung them as far as we could in the tide  
"Now take that, ye devils," cried Arthur McBride, "and temper your steel in the mornin'"  
And the little wee drummer we flattened his pouch, and we made a football of his rowdy-dow-dow  
Kicked it into the ocean to rock and to roll, and bade it a devious returning.

Oh me and me cousin one Arthur McBride as we went a' walkin' down by the seaside  
A-seekin' good fortune and what might betide – just as the mornin' was dawnin'.