

**Synopsis**

A group of itinerant Irish agricultural labourers come to England in search of work. When seeking work on a railway line they are attacked by the English navvies who they defeat.

**Text**

We sailed away from the quay, and never received a shock  
 We landed safe on shore, one side the Clarence dock  
 And numbers of our Irishmen did meet us in the town  
 Hurra for Paddy's lovely land, it was the word went round -  
 Away we went with one content, to drink strong ale and wine  
 And each man drank a favourite toast to those he left at home  
 We drank and sung the tavern rung despising Erin's foes  
 Or any man that hates the land where Patrick's shamrock grows  
 Next morning by the break of day as quickly you shall hear  
 One hundred strong we walk along without (sic) dread or fear  
 Each mam (sic) had a black-thorn he brought from Paddy's land  
 And a hook that glanced like polished steel, or silver in his hand  
 We tramped away for 3 long days, high wages for to find  
 And on the following evening, unto a railyway (sic) line  
 The navys (sic) they walked up to us and loudly they did rail  
 They cursed and damned the Paddy's or the son of Greneuail

Then up spoke Barney Walsh and says what do you's mean  
 Are we not men the same as you's and hates a cowards name  
 So leave our way without delay or some of ou's (sic) will fall  
 For here stand the sons of Irishmen, who never fear'd a ball -  
 Those English navys (sic) cursed they'd kill us every one  
 And makes us think of '98 Ballinamuch and Slieneamon  
 Maguire just and true they curs'd his blest remains  
 Which made the county Leitrim boys to burn for revenge  
 The bricks and stones all like hail in showers fell around  
 We fought from half past 4 until the son was going set  
 Hehen (sic) Reilly says my Irish boys I fear we will be bet (sic) -  
 Hvt (sic) now with me my countrymen renew the fight once more  
 Gailed (sic) their foes on every sid (sic) more desperate than beforfly (sic)  
 We'll let them know before we go we'd rather fight than e (sic)  
 For you's know boys when at the worst that we'd rather die

We sallied back with Barney and encompassed them around  
 Like Sampson and the Philistines we laid them on ther [illegible]  
 We fought our way upon that day we never did give o'er  
 Until we proved ourselves true Irish from off the sham [illegible]  
 When the fight commenced the second time its thero [illegible]  
 Whne the siythes (sic) and hooks flourished says navys were [illegible]  
 The cowardly clan away the (sic) ran with their heads ain [illegible]  
 So they'll think of Barney Reilly and the boys of Ball [illegible]  
 But here's long life to O'reilly, M'cormak [illegible]  
 Likewise brave Magovern who never was af [illegible]  
 And every man from Paddy's land that fought upon that fg sic) [illegible]  
 And forced those English navys in ha [illegible]

**Glossary:**

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Clarence dock                      Probably Clarence dock Liverpool (opened September 1830)

"'98 Ballinamuch                      irish defeats during the United Irishmen Rebellion, 1798  
and Slieneamon"

"sons of Greneuail "                      Gráinne Ní Mháille (c. 1530 – c. 1603), Irish queen and folk heroine

**Source of Text:**                      Bodleian Library, *allegro* Catalogue of Ballads; [2806 c.15\(176\)](#)

**Music.**                                      No tune given

**Source of Music:**                      No tune given

**Date:**                                      See Notes on Variant Set 005 – The Irish Harvestmen's Triumph

**Printer:**                                      Nugent, J.F. & Co.

**Where Printed:**                      Dublin

**Author :**                                      Anonymous

**Variant Set:**                              005 – The Irish Harvestmen's Triumph - Set members Bar 181 and 524,  
The keywords in the entry for Roud 569, "Bricks and Mortar" suggest that  
Bar 042 may be an oral version of this song

### **Notes of the Song and Its Historical Background**

See Notes on Variant Set 005 – The Irish Harvestmen's Triumph