

*Around the Campfire:
A Civil War Songbook
Compiled by: Neil K. MacMillan*

Introduction

The men and boys who served during the Civil War were heroes and yet, they were ordinary people for their day. They came from farms and cities. They were brick layers, farmers, stevedores, glass blowers and firemen. And they were husbands, sons, lovers and brothers. A handful were women.

They saw horrors that this country hasn't seen in 136 years. American service men wouldn't see anything to compare with Andersonville or Elmira for eighty-one years. They would never again see a day as bloody as September 17, 1862. Over six hundred thousand of them would die of gunfire, bayonet and the myriad of diseases that ran rampant through camps on both sides and all theatres of the great conflict.

Like most other units, the 12th United States Infantry suffered what would be considered inordinate casualties today. When the regiment was formed in May of 1861 at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York, it numbered 1070 men and officers. Three and a half years later, when the unit was withdrawn from combat, there were 124. There had been several recruiting drives in the interim but the numbers speak for themselves. In that the Regulars of the 12th were no different from their Volunteer counterparts. The 12th is still serving with the United States Army.

The men swore, drank, fought and they sang. I have tried to put songs representing as many facets of the Civil War as possible. It is intended as first and foremost a songbook. Secondly, it is a brief glimpse into the horror and majesty that was the American Civil War.

This book is dedicated to the men and women of the 12th regiment of Infantry. I would like to acknowledge my Pardes in the re-enacting community, especially in Company A, 12th US Infantry "Sykes' Regulars" and our Commanding officer, Larry Allen, a good mentor and a true friend. I would also like to thank the men and women affiliated with the 4th US Infantry, Company I including Dave Childs, Brian Webster, Col. NJANG and Frank and Jennifer Pullano.

To the 25th Massachussets Volunteer Infantry, thanks for the nights around the campfire. I'd also like to acknowledge Don, Martha and Stephanie Jeffery of the 157th New York Volunteer Infantry and lastly but never leastly my wife Peggy for putting up with an old Infantry bummer like me.

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We will welcome to our number the loyal, true and brave,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.
And although they may be poor, he shall never be a slave,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

Chorus:

So we're springing to the call from the East and from the West,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.
And we'll hurl the rebel crew from this land we love the best,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.

Chorus:

But our country called you, Darling, angels cheer your way,
While our nation's sons are fighting, we can only pray.
Nobly strike for God and liberty, let all nations see
How we love our starry banner, emblem of the free.

Chorus:

General Scott and Taylor too, Heave away, Santy Anno!
Made poor Santy meet his Waterloo, all on the plains of Mexico.

Chorus:

Santy Anno was a good old man, Heave away, Santy Anno!
Till he got in to war with your Uncle Sam, all on the plains of Mexico.

Chorus:

When I leave the ship I'll settle down, Heave away, Santy Anno!
And marry a girl named Sally Brown, all on the plains of Mexico.

Chorus:

Dixie's Land

Daniel Decatur Emmet

"Dixie's Land is arguably the best known song of the Civil War. It is safe to say that more people know the second verse of this unofficial anthem of the Confederacy than know the second verse of "The Star Spangled Banner." Composer Daniel Decatur Emmet, a staunch Unionist, so despised what his song became that he grew to hate his best known work. The song was a favorite of Abraham Lincoln and he requested it be played the night Robert E. Lee surrendered.

C

I wish I was in the land of cotton,

F

Old times there are not forgotten.

F C Am, G C

Look away, look away look away, Dixie's land.

C

In Dixie's Land where I was born in,

F

Early on one frosty morning.

F C Am G C

Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.

Chorus:

C F D7 G

Then I wish I was in Dixie, hooray, hooray!

G C F C D7-G

In Dixie's land I'll take my stand to live and die in Dixie.

G C G C

Away, away away down south in Dixie.

G C G C

Away, away away down south in Dixie.

Old missus married Will the Weaver,
 William was a gay deciever.
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
 But when he put his arm around her,
 Smiled as fierce as a forty pounder,
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
Chorus:

His face was sharp as a butcher's cleaver,
 But that did not seem to grieve her.
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
 Old missus acted the foolish part,
 And died for a man who broke her heart.
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
Chorus:

Now here's to the health of the next old missus,
 And all the gals that want to kiss us.
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
 But if you want to drive away sorrow,
 Come and hear this song tomorrow.
 Look away. look away, look away, Dixie's land.
Chorus:

There's buckwheat cakes and injin batter,
 Makes you fat or a little fatter.
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
 Then hoe it down and scratch your gravel,
 To Dixie's land I'm bound to travel.
 Look away, look away, look away, Dixie's land.
Chorus:

The minstrel boy shall return again,
When we hear the news, we will cheer it.
The minstrel boy shall return again,
Torn perhaps in body, not in spirit.
And then may he play his harp in peace,
In a world as heaven intended.
When all the words of war shall cease,
And every battle must be ended.

We'll finish the temple of freedom, and make it capacious within,
That all who seek shelter may find it, whatever the hue of their skin.
What ever the hue of their skin, whatever the hue of their skin,
That all who seek shelter may find it, whatever the hue of their skin.

Success to the old fashioned doctrine, that men are created all free,
And down with the power of the despot, wherever his stronghold may be.
Whereever his strong hold may be, where ever his stronghold may be,
And down with the power of the despot, wherever his stronghold may be.

Rosin the Beau

Traditional

You'll notice that I didn't provide the chords. As I noted, Jesse Hutchinson used the tune of Rosin the Beau for Lincoln and Liberty. A favorite of Irish soldiers, the song was well known before the Civil War. It is the story of a stout hearted fellow not averse to taking a wee drop of the creature now and again. it is a favorite of Major Allen's and mine.

I've travelled the world all over, and now to the next one I go,
 I know that fit quarters are waiting to welcome old Rosin the Beau.
 To welcome old Rosin the Beau, me lads, to welcome old Rosin the Beau,
 I know that fit quarters are waiting, to welcome old Rosin the Beau.

When I'm dead and laid out on the counter, a voice will be heard from below,
 Saying "Send down a hogshead of whiskey, to drink with old Rosin the Beau."
 To drink with old Rosin the Beau, me lads, to drink with old Rosin the Beau,
 Saying "Send down a hogshead of whiskey, to drink with old Rosin the Beau."

Get a half dozen stout fellows, and stand them all up in a row,
 Let them drink out of half gallon bottles, to the memory of Rosin the Beau.
 To the memory of Rosin the Beau, me lads, to the memory of Rosin the Beau,
 Let them drink out of half gallon bottles, to the memory of Rosin the Beau.

Then get me some bottles of porter, put one at me head and me toe,
 With a diamond ring scratch upon them, the name of old Rosin the Beau.
 The name of old Rosin the Beau, me lads, the name of old Rosin the Beau,
 With a diamond ring scratch upon them, the name of old Rosin the Beau.

Then take that half dozen stout fellows, and let them all stagger and go,
 Dig a bloody great hole in the meadow, and in it toss Rosin the Beau.
 And in it toss Rosin the Beau, me lads, and in it toss Rosin the Beau,
 Dig a bloody great hole in the meadow, and in it toss Rosin the Beau.

'Tis a gay round of pleasures, nor will I leave behind a foe,
 And when my companions are jovial, they will drink to old Rosin the Beau.
 They will drink to old Rosin the Beau, me lads, they will drink to old Rosin the
 Beau,
 And when my companions are jovial, they will drink to old Rosin the Beau.

My life is now drawn to a closing, as all will some day be so,
But we'll drink a full bumper at parting, to the memory of Rosin the Beau.
To the memory of Rosin the Beau, me lads, to the memory of Rosin the Beau,
But we'll drink a full bumper at parting, to the memory of Rosin the Beau

I've lived for the good of my nation, and my sons are all growing lo,
And I hope that the next generation, will resemble old Rosin the Beau.
Will resemble old Rosin the Beau, me lads, will resemble old Rosin the Beau,
And I hope the next generation, will resemble old Rosin the Beau.

I hear the old tyrant approaching, that cruel remorseless old foe.
But I lift my glass high unto him, have a drink with old Rosin the Beau.
Have a drink with old Rosin the Beau, Me lads, have a drink with old Rosin the
Beau,
I lift my glass high unto him, have a drink with old Rosin the Beau.

Marching Through Georgia

Henry Clay Work

One of the more prolific and better known composers during the Civil War, Henry Work wrote this piece to commemorate Sherman's march to the sea. It is a rousing tune that speaks of the Union's ultimate victory. Work may well have written this immediately following the Civil War. It remains a favorite among reenactors.

G C G
 Bring the good old bugle, boys, we'll sing another song,
 G D D7
 Sing it with a spirit that will start the world along
 G C G
 Sing it as we used to sing it, fifty thousand strong,
 D D7 G
 While we were marching through Georgia.

Chorus:

G C G
 Hurrah, Hurrah, we bring the jubilee!
 G D D7
 Hurrah, hurrah, the flag that sets you free.
 G C G
 So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
 D D7 G
 While we were marching through Georgia.

How the darkies shouted when they heard the joyful sound,
 How the turkeys gobbled which our commissary found.
 How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground,
 While we were marching through Georgia.

Chorus:

Yes and there were Union men who wept with joyful tears,
When they saw the honored flag they hadn't seen in years.
Hardly could they be restrained from breaking out in cheers,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Chorus:

Sherman's dashing Yankee boys will never reach the coast,
So the saucy rebels said and 'twas a handsome boast.
Had they not forgot alas to reckon with the host,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Chorus:

So we made a thoroughfare for freedom and her train,
Sixty miles in latitude, three hundred to the main.
Treason fled before us for resistance was in vain,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Chorus:

It matters little now, Lorena, the past is in the eternal past;
Our heads will soon lie low, Lorena, life's tide is ebbing out so fast.
There is a future! Oh thank God! of life this is so small a part!
"Tis dust to dust beneath the sod; but up there, 'tis heart to heart.

I'm going to get a drink don't you want to go,
I'm going to get a drink don't you want to go,
I'm going to get a drink don't you want to go,
Oh, that soldier's joy!

It's twenty-five cents for the morphine,
It's fifteen cents for the beer,
It's twenty-five cents for the morphine,
Going to drink me away from here!

Listen to the Mockingbird

Traditional

This song although not generally thought of as a Civil War song, must have been rather well known. Union forces serving under Ulysses S. Grant invented a parody about the siege of Vicksburg using the music for this song. The theme of lost love and death is quite typical of the Victorian era. The tune was later used in the Three Stooges' movies.

D7 G D7 G
 I'm dreaming now of Hallie, sweet Hallie, sweet Hallie,
 G D7 G C D7 G
 I'm dreaming now of Hallie, for the thought of her is one that never dies.
 G D7 G D7 G
 She's sleeping in the valley, in the valley, in the valley,
 G D7 G C D7 G
 She's sleeping in the valley and the mockingbird is singing where she lies.

Chorus:

G D7 G
 Listen to the mockingbird, listen to the mockingbird,
 G D7 G
 The mockingbird is singing over her grave.
 G D7 G
 Listen to the mockingbird, listen to the mockingbird,
 G C D7 G
 Still singing where the weeping willow waves.

Ah well I yet can remember, I remember, I remember,
 Ah well, I yet can remember, when we gathered in the cotton side by side.
 It was in the mild mid-September, in September, in September,
 It was in the mild mid-September, and the mockingbird was singing far and wide.

Chorus:

When charms of Spring are awoken, are awoken, are awoken,
When charms of Spring are awoken, and the mockingbird is singing on the bough.
I feel like one so forsaken, so forsaken, so forsaken,
I feel like one so forsaken, since my Hallie is no longer with me now,

Chorus:

The Siege of Vicksburg

Traditional

One of the many Civil War parody songs, this one was likely invented by a bored soldier during the siege. It is sung to the tune of "Listen to the Mockinbird."

It was at the siege of Vicksburg, of Vicksburg, of Vicksburg,
It was at the siege of Vicksburg, where the Parrott shells were whistling through the
air.

Listen to the Parrott shells, listen to the Parrott shells
The Parrott shells are whistling through the air.
Listen to the Parrott shells, listen to the Parrott shells,
The Parrott shells are whistling through the air.

How well we do remember, we remember, we remember,
How well we do remember when the Minie balls were whistling through the air.
Listen to the Minie balls, listen to the Minie balls,
The Minie balls are whistling through the air.
Listen to the Minie balls, listen to the Minie balls,
The Minie balls are whistling through the air.

There's milk in the dairy nine days old, sing song Kitty, can't you ki' me oh!
Frogs and the skeeters getting mighty bold, sing song Kitty, can't you ki' me oh!
They try to sleep but it ain't no use, sing song Kitty, can't you ki' me oh!
They hop all around in the chicken roost, sing song kitty can't you ki' me oh!

Chorus:

There was a frog who lived in a poo, sing song Kitty, can't you ki' me oh!
And sure he was the biggest fool, sing song Kitty, can't you ki' me oh!
For he could dance and he could sing, sing song Kitty can't you ki' me oh!
And make the woods all around him ring, sing song Kitty can't you ki' me oh!

Chorus:

Johnny is Gone for a Soldier

Words: Septimus Winner, Music: Traditional

Like many songs of the Civil War, this is a song of parted lovers. "Johnny is Gone for a Soldier" predates the American Revolution and was well known in the United States by the beginning of the Civil War. I learned the words below from Mark Slayton of the 25th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. A good friend and better guitar player than I am.

Em Bm Em
 I trace these gardens o'er and o'er,
 G Em
 Meditate on each sweet flower,
 Em C
 Thinking of each happy hour,
 C Bm Em
 Johnny is gone for a soldier.

Chorus:

Shool-a, shool-a, shule agradh,
 Time can onnly heal my woe,
 Since the lad of my heart from me did go,
 Johnny is gone for a soldier.

Some say my love is gone to France,
 There his fortune to advance,
 And if I find him it's but a chance,
 Johnny is gone for a soldier.

Chorus:

I'll sell my frock, I'll sell my wheel,
Buy my love a sword of steel,
So in the battle he may reel,
Johnny is gone for a soldier.

Chorus:

I wish I were on yonder hill,
It's there I'd sit and cry my fill,
So every tear would turn a mill,
Johnny has gone for a soldier.

Chorus:

I'll dye my dress all over red,
And o'er the world I'll beg my bread,
So all my friends may think me dead,
Johnny is gone for a soldier.

Chorus:

Evalina and I one fine evening in June,
Took a walk all alone by the lihgt of the moon;
The planets all shone, for the heavens were clear,
And I felt round the heart oh most mightyt queer.

Chorus:

Tom Dooley

Traditional

"Tom Dooley originated in the mountains of western North Carolina. This fast paced tune deals with unrequited love and murder. Tradition has it that the song was written by Dooley (or Dula) while he awaited hanging for the murder of Laura Foster a couple of years after the Civil War. Dooley fought with distinction in that war. The song remains a favorite among reenactors.

G

Hang your head Tom Dooley,

G

Hang your head and cry.

G

D

Killed poor Laura Foster,

D

G

You know you're bound to die.

You took her on the hillside,

As God almighty knows.

You took her on the hillside,

And there you hid her clothes.

You took her by the roadside,

Where you begged to be excused.

You took her by the roadside,

Where there you hid her shoes.

You took her on the hillside,
To make her be your wife.
You took her on the hillside,
And there you took her life.

Take down my old violin,
And play it all you please,
At this time tomorrow,
It'll be no use to me.

I dug a grave four feet long,
I dug it three feet deep.
And throwed the cold clay over her,
And tramped it with my feet.

This world and one more,
Reckon where I'd be.
If it hadn't been for Grayson,
I'd a-been in Tennessee.

Hang your head Tom Dooley,
Hang your head and cry.
Killed poor Laura Foster,
You know you're bound to die.

Kathleen Mavourneen, awake form thy slumbers,
The blue mountains glow in the sun's golden light.
Ah! Where is the spell that once hung on my slumbers,
Arise in thy beauty, thou star of my night.
Mavourneen, Mavourneen, my sad tears are falling
To think that from Erin and thee I must part.

Chorus:

We've been tenting tonight on the old camp ground,
Thinking of days gone by.
Of the loved ones at home who gave us the hand,
And the tear that said goodbye.

Chorus:

We are tired of war on the old camp ground,
Many are dead and gone.
Of the brave and the true who've left their homes,
Others have been wounded long.

Chorus:

We've been fighting today on the old camp ground,
Many are lying near.
Some are dead and some are dying,
Many are in tears.

Chorus:

Dying tonight, dying tonight, dying on the old campground.

Just before the battle the general hears a row,
he says, "The Yanks are coming, I hear their rifles now."
He turns around in wonder and what do you think he sees,
The Georgia militia eating goober peas.

Chorus:

I think my song has lasted almost long enough,
The subjects's interesting but the rhymes are mighty rough.
I wish this war was over, when free from rags and fleas,
We'd kiss our wives and sweethearts and gobble goober peas!

Chorus:

The wagon broke down with a terrible crash,
 And out on the prairie rolled all sorts of trash.
 A few little baby clothes drawn up with care,
 Looked rather suspicious but all on the square.

Chorus:

The Indians came down in a wild screaming horde,
 And Betsy was scared they would scalp her adored.
 Behind the front wagon wheel Betsy did crawl,
 It was there she fought Indians with musket and ball.

Chorus:

The alkalai desert was burning and bare,
 And Ike went in search of the death that lurked there.
 "My dear old Pike County, I'll go back to you.",
 Said Betsy, "You'll go by yourself if you do."

Chorus:

It was there in the desert that Betsy gave out,
 And down in the sand she lay rolling about.
 While Ike in great horror looked on with surprise,
 said, "Betsy get up you'll get sand in your eyes."

Chorus:

Sweet Betsy got up with a great deal of pain,
 And hoped she would go to Pike County again.
 Thenm Ike gave a sigh and they fondly embraced,
 And traveled around with his arm round her waist.

Chorus:

They crossed the wide prairie, they climbed the high peaks,
They camped in the mountains for weeks upon weeks.
They fought with the Indians with musket and ball,
And reached California in spite of it all.

Chorus:

All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight

Words: Ethel Lynn Beers, Music: John Hill Hewett

A nameless soldier dies in the midst of war on a static front. It rates barely a paragraph in a local newspaper. Such was the case several times for the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia. It wasn't unusual eighty years later during the second world war. Beers and Hewett tapped into the feelings of sorrow, loneliness and resentment felt by those who endured the danger on picket duty not because they were warning of an imminent attack but because an officer or non-com on the other side ordered their pickets to shoot at anything that moved or the opposing picket loosed a shot out of boredom or anger.

G D7 G D7 G
 All quiet along the Potomac tonight, except here and there a stray picket,
 G D7 G D A7 D
 Is shot as he walks on his beat to and fro, by a rifleman hid in the thicket.
 D D7 G C A7 D7
 'Tis nothing a private or two now and then, will not count in the news of the battle.
 D7 C D7 G C G D7 G
 Not an officer lost only one of the men, moaning out all alone the death rattle.
 G D7 G
 All quiet along the Potomac tonight!

All quiet along the Potomac tonight, Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming.
 And their tents in the rays of the clear Autumn moon, and the light of their
 campfires are gleaming;
 There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread, as he tramps from the rock to the
 fountain,
 And he thinks of the two on the low trundle bed, far away in the cot on the
 mountain.
 All quiet along the Potomac tonight!

His musket grows slack, his face dark and grim, grows ghentle with memories
 tender,
 As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep, and their mother may heaven defend
 her.
 The moon seems to shine as brightly as then, that night when the love yet unspoken,
 Leapt up to his lips and wityh low murmured vows, were pledged to be ever
 unbroken.
 All quiet along the Potomac tonight!

Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes, he dashes off the tears that are
welling,

And he gathers his gun up close to his breast, as if to keep down the hearts swelling;
He passes the fountain the blasted pine tree, and his foot step is lagging and weary,
Yet onward he goes through the broad belt of light, toward the shade of the forest
so dreary.

All quiet along the Potomac tonight!

Hark was it the night wind that rustled the trees? was it the moonlight so
wondrously flashing?

It looked like a rifle "Ah, Mary goodbye!" and his life blood is ebbing and plashing.

All quiet along the Potomac tonight, no sound save the rush of the river;

While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead, "the picket's off duty forever."

All quiet along the Potomac tonight!

All quiet along the Potomac tonight!

Beautiful dreamer, out on the sea,
Mermaids are chanting the wild Lorilei.
Over the streamlet vapors are borne,
Waiting to fade at the bright coming morn.
Beautiful dreamer, beam on my heart,
Even as morn on the streamlet and sea.
Then will all clouds of sorrow depart.
Beautiful dreamer awake unto me.
Beautiful dreamer awake unto me.

Kingdom Coming

Henry Clay Work

Rarely heard today, "Kindom Coming" was Work's parody of how slaveholders dealt with the coming emancipation. It is mostly heard as an instrumental due to the racist tone of the lyrics. I include it as a historical piece and I do sing it at reenactments.

C G
 Say Darkies hab you seen de massa wid de mustache on his face?
 G C G7 C
 Go long de road sometime dis mornin', like he's gone to leab de place.
 C F C G7
 He seen a smoke way up de ribber where de Linkum gumboats lay,
 G7 C G C
 He took his hat an' leff berry sudden and I 'spec he's run away.

Chorus:

C F
 Oh, de massa run ha, ha!
 F C G
 De Darkey stay ho, ho!
 G C G C
 And it must be now de kingdom comin' in de year of Jubilo!

He six foot one way, two foot de udder an' he weigh tree hundred pound,
 His coat so big that he couldn't pay de tailor an' it won't go half way round.
 He drill so much dey call him "Cap'ain" and he get so drefful tan,
 I spec he try an' fool dem Yankees for to tink he's contraband.

Chorus:

De darkies feel so lonesome libbin in de log house on de lawn,
 Dey move dar tings to Massa's parlor for to keep it while he's gone.
 Dar's wine and cider in de kitchen and de darkies de'll hab some,
 I spose dey'll be as confiscated when de Linkum sojers come.

Chorus:

De oberseer he make us trouble and he drike us round a spell,
We lock him up in de smoke house cellar, wid de key trown down de well.
De whip is lost, de han'cuff broken, but de massa'll hab his pay,
He's old enough big enough, ought to known better dan to went an run away.

Chorus:

Three hundred thousand Yankees is stiff in Southern dust,
We got three hundred thousand before they conquered us.
They dies of Southern fever and Southern steel and shot,
I wish it was three milliion, instead of what we got.

I can't take up my musket and fight 'em now no more,
But I ain't a-gonna love 'em now that is sartin sure.
And I don't want no pardon for what I was and am,
I won't be reconstructed and I do not care a damn!

Every new man makes us stronger,
Every new man makes us stronger,
Every new man makes us stronger,

We have worked in dark and danger,
We have worked in dark and danger,
We have worked in dark and danger,
Children of the Lord!

Lay down boys and take a little nap,
Fourteen miles to the Cumberland Gap.

Chorus:

So within the prison cell we are waiting for the day,
That shall come and open wide the iron door "**Iron Door!**"
And the hollow eye grows bright and the poor heart almost gay,
As we think of seeing home and friends once more.

Chorus:

Bard of Armagh

Traditional

This tune was popular among Irish troops during the Civil War. Cowboys during the great cattle drives after the Civil War wrote new words and the song is famous in America as "The Streets of Laredo" Mark Slayton taught me this song and I sing it frequently.

C F C G
 Oh list to the tale of a poor Irish harper,
 C Am C G
 And scorn not the strings in his old withered hand.
 C F C G
 But remember these fingers could once move more sharper,
 C Am G C
 To waken the echoes of his dear native land.

How I long for to muse on the days of my boyhood,
 Though four score and three years have fled by since then.
 Still it gives sweet reflection as every young joy should,
 That merry-hearted boys make the best of old men.

At wake or at fair I would twirl my shillelagh,
 And trip through the jigs with me brogues bound with straw.
 And all the pretty maidens from the village, the valley,
 Loved the bold Phelim Brady, the bard of Armagh.

And when Sergeant Death's cold arms shall embrace me,
 Oh, lull me to sleep with sweet "Erin Go Bragh."
 By the side of my Kathleen, my own love then place me,
 And forget Phelim Brady, the bard of Armagh.

Hard Tack

Unkown; a parody based on "Hard Times" by Stephen C. Foster

Soldier and sailors have been making up parodies since there were songs. Some of our most venerable songs were adapted from other songs. Our nation's anthem is one such song. "Hard Tack" was probably a Confederate adaptation of Stephen C. Foster's timeless classic "Hard Times." It was quickly adopted by both sides. It remains popular with reenactors because of its jaunty, humorous quality.

D Em Bm
 Let us close our game of poker, take our tin cups in our hand,
 G D Bm A D
 As we all stand by the cook's tent door.

D Em Bm
 As dried mummies of hard crackers are handed to each man,
 G D Bm A D
 Oh, hard tack come again no more.

Chorus:

D G D
 'Tis the song, the sigh of the hungry,
 D G D Bm A
 Oh hard tack, hard tack, come again no more.

A D G Bm
 Many days you have lingered upon our stomachs sore,
 G D Bm A D
 Oh hard tack come again no more.

'Tis a hungry, thirsty soldier who wears his life away,
 In torn clothes whose better days are o'er.
 And he's sighing now for whiskey in a voice as dry as hay,
 Oh, hard tack come again no more.

Chorus:

'Tis the wail that is heard in the camp by night and day,
'Tis the murmur that is mingles with each snore.
'Tis the sighing of the soul for the spring chicken far away,
Oh, hard tack come again no more.

Chorus:

But to all these cries and murmurs there has come a sudden hush,
As frail frames are fainting at the door.
For they feed us now on horse feed that the cooks call mush,
Oh, hard tack come again once more.

Final Chorus:

'Tis the dying wail of the starving,
Hard tack, hard tack, come again once more.
You were old and very wormy but we'll pass your failings o'er,
Oh, hard tack come again once more

Repeat Chorus