

Irish Rover

Verse1

C F
On the Fourth of July 1806
C Am G
We set sail from the sweet cove of Cork.
C F
We were sailing away with a cargo of bricks
C G C
For the grand City Hall in New York.
C G
'Twas a wonderful craft, she was rigged for and aft,
C G
And oh, how the wild wind drove her.
C F
She stood several blasts, she had twenty-seven masts
C G C
And they called her the Irish Rover.

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## Verse2

We had one million bags of the best Sligo rags,  
We had two million barrels of stone,  
We had three million sides of old blind horses hides,  
We had four million barrels of bones.  
We had five million hogs, and six million dogs,  
Seven million barrels of porter  
We had eight million bails of old nanny-goats' tails  
In the hold of the Irish Rover.

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Verse3

There was awl Mickey Coote who played hard on his flute
When the ladies lined up for a set.
He was tootlin' with skill for each sparkling quadrille,
Though the dancers were fluther'd and bet.
With his smart witty talk he was cock of the walk
And he rolled the dames under and over.
They all knew at a glance when he took up his stance
That he sailed in the Irish Rover.

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## Verse4

There was Barney McGee from the banks of the Lee,  
There was Hogan from County Tyrone  
There was Johnny McGurk who was scared stiff of work  
And a man from Westmeath called Malone.  
There was Slugger O'Toole who was drunk as a rule  
And Fighting Bill Treacy from Dover  
And your man, Mike McCann from the banks of the Bann  
Was the skipper on the Irish Rover.

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Verse5

For a sailor it's a bother of life,
It's so lonesome by night and by day
When he longs for the shore and a charming young whore
Who will melt all his troubles away.
All the noise and the rout swillin' poitin and stout,
For him soon is done and over
Of the love of a maid he is never afraid,
That ould salt from the Irish Rover.

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## Verse6

We had sailed seven years when the mizzens broke out  
And the ship lost it's way in the fog  
And that whale of a crew was reduced down to two,  
Just meself and the Captain's old dog.  
Then the ship struck a rock, Oh Lord! what a shock,  
The bulkhead was turned right over.  
Turned nine times around and the poor old dog was drowned,  
I'm the last of the Irish Rover.

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The lyrics to the Irish Rover tell the story of a wondrous ship which sets sail from Cork to transport its huge, improbable cargo to New York.

It has a crew of colourful characters including Slugger O'Toole and Johnny McGurk who was scared stiff of work.

The lyrics are surreal at times, always playful and sometimes risqué – especially by nineteenth century standards which is when the song first appeared.

The Irish Rover's huge size can't prevent it sinking, however. The crew is lost, even the dog drowns and only the singer survives. For more information about The Irish Rover and videos of various performers, visit
<http://www.irishmusicforever.com/irish-rover>

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