

Cockles & Mussels

(Ruacain is Sliogáin)

Words & Music:
Traditional Irish(?)

I can do no better than Vivian & Jack, whose IrishPage.com site provides the Irish translation for this song about Molly Malone (Mol Ní Mhaoileoin). Molly's cry of "Cockles & Mussels" was a vendor cry, like "Chairs to mend". Here are their notes: "As well as being known and sung internationally, the popular song 'Cockles and Mussels' has become a sort of unofficial anthem of Dublin city. A statue to her is a familiar landmark at the corner of Grafton and Suffolk Street, Dublin.

This is a street sculpture of Molly Malone on a busy Dublin corner. They say she was a fish merchant by day and of quite a different occupation by night. I, myself, think it is a smear. I like Molly. She is my favorite Dubliner. But the locals still call the sculpture 'the tart with the cart'."

1. English version:

C G
In Dublin's fair city, where girls are so pretty,
C Em Dm G
I first set my eyes on sweet Molly Malone,
C G
As she wheeled her wheel-barrow through streets broad & narrow,
C Em C G C
Crying, "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-o!"

CHORUS:

C G
"Alive, alive-o! Oh, alive, alive-o!"
C Em C G C
Crying, "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-o!"

She was a fish-monger, but sure 'twas no wonder,
For so were her father and mother before,
And they each wheeled their barrow through streets broad and narrow,
Crying, "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-o!"

CHORUS:

She died of a fever, and no one could save her.
And that was the end of sweet Molly Malone,
But her ghost wheels her barrow through streets broad and narrow,
Crying, "Cockles and mussels, alive, alive-o!"

CHORUS:

2. Irish version:

Gan Údar

I mBaile Athá Cliath, Ní fhaca mé riamh,
Aon chailín níos sciamhaí ná Mol Ní Mhaoileoin,
Ag stiúradh a barra, gach áit ins a chathair,
Le ruacain is sliogáin, is iad go breá beo!

Is iad go breá beo, is iad go breá beo,
Le ruacain is sliogáin, is iad go breá beo.

Ba mhangaire éisc í, an cheird di ab éasca,
Ós amhlaidh dá muintir ó chianta fadó,
Ag stiúradh a mbarra, gach áit ins a chathair,
Le ruacain is sliogáin, is iad go breá beo!

Curfá:

Ach mo chreach is mo dhiacair, fuair Mol bocht an fiabhras,
Agus b'in i an chríoch bhí le Mol Ní Mhaoiloin,
Ach tá taibhse sa chathair, ag stiúradh a barra,
Le ruacain is sliogáin, is iad go breá beo!

Curfá:

3. Allan Sherman's parody (part 1 of the medley "Shticks Of One, A Half-Dozen Of The Other")

She wheels her wheelbarrow through streets that are narrow.
Her barrow is narrow, her hips are too wide.
So, wherever she wheels it, the neighborhood feels it.
Her girdle keeps scraping the homes on each side.

In Dublin's fair city, where girls are so pretty,
My Molly stands out 'cause she weighs eighteen stone.

[spoken: That's 256 pounds.]

I don't mind her fat, but...

It's not only that, but...

She's cock-eyed and muscle-bound Molly Malone.

4. Allan Sherman's Encron parody:

Sherman also parodied this for the Encron folks in "Allen Sherman Pours It On For Carpets Made With Encron Polyester".

They've made a new carpet, so handsome and sharp it
Can make your house glitter and glimmer and glow.
And the name of this wonder that won't knuckle under
Is Encron, it's Encron, alive, alive-o.
Oh, did I say "Encron"? That name's got to go.