

Rare Old Mountain Dew

(a.k.a. "The Real Old Mountain Dew")

Words: Samuel Lover (1797-1869)

Music: Possibly Traditional(?)

First published in 1917

For Americans, "Rare Old Mountain Dew" has nearly the exact same tune as "Good Old Mountain Dew" -- that Prohibition-era classic you heard on "Hee-Haw". This is the original Irish or Scots(?) version, which likely traveled over to America with the migrants. It's enjoyed a resurgence in recent years with Irish & pub bands like The Pogues or The Dropkick Murphys. I've put it in the key of A, but this four-chord song is easy enough to transpose to any key. Some versions start with the chorus.

A D A E
Let the grasses grow & the waters flow in a free and easy way.
A D A E A
But give me enough of the rare old stuff that's made near Galway Bay
A F#m
Come, gangers all from Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim, too.
A D A E A
We'll give 'em a slip & we'll take a sip of the rare old mountain dew.

CHORUS: *[just Irish "scat" over the tune - these words are approximate]*
Hi di-diddly-idle-um, diddly-doodle-idle-um, diddly-doo-ri-diddlum-day.
Hi di-diddly-idle-um, diddly-doodle-idle-um, diddly-doo-ri-diddlum-day.

There's a neat little still at the foot of the hill,
Where the smoke curls up to the sky
By a whiff of the smell you can plainly tell,
That there's poitín, boys, close by
For it fills the air with a perfume rare & betwixt both me and you,
As home we roll, we can drink a bowl, or a bucketful of mountain dew.

CHORUS:

Now, learned men as use the pen, have writ the praises high
Of the sweet poitín from Ireland green, distilled from wheat and rye.
Away with yer pills, it'll cure all ills, be ye Pagan, Christian or Jew.
So, take off your coat & grease your throat
With a bucketful of mountain dew.

CHORUS: