

Star of the County Down

Text: Cathal Mac Garvey (1866–1927)

Melodie: Traditional, 1726

1. Near Banbridge town, in the County Down,
one morning last July,
down a breen green came a sweet colleen
and she smiled as she passed me by.
Oh she looked so sweet from her two bare feet
to the sheen of her nut-brown hair.
Such a coaxing elf, sure I shook myself
to be sure I was really there.

Chorus:

And from Bantry Bay up to Derry Quay,
and from Galway to Dublin town
no maid I've seen like the brown colleen
that I met in the County Down.

2. As she onward sped I shook my head
and I gazed with a feeling rare,
and I said, says I, to a passerby
"Who's the maid with the nut-brown hair?"
He smiled at me, and with pride says he,
"That's the gem of Ireland's crown.
She's young Rosie McCann from the banks of the Bann,
she's the star of the County Down."

Chorus

3. I've travelled a bit, but never was hit
since my roving career began.
But fair and square I surrendered there
to the charms of young Rose McCann.
I'd a heart to let and no tenant yet,
did I meet with in shawl or gown.
But in she went and I asked no rent
from the star of the County Down.

Chorus

4. At the crossroads fair I'll be surely there
and I'll dress in my Sunday clothes
and I'll try sheep's eyes, and deludhering lies
on the heart of the nut-brown rose.
No pipe I'll smoke, no horse I'll yoke,
though with rust my plow turns brown,
till a smiling bride by my own fireside
sits the star of the County Down.

Chorus