

# Roddy McCorley

By Anna Johnston, who used the pen name Ethna Carbery (1866–1902)

Oh, see the fleet-foot hosts of men who speed with faces wan  
From farmstead and from thresher's cot  
along the banks of Ban They come with vengeance in their eyes;  
too late, too late are they For young  
Roddy McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

Oh Ireland, Mother Ireland, you love them still the best  
The fearless brave who fighting fall upon your  
hapless breast, But never a one of all your dead more bravely  
fell in fray, Than he who marches to his  
fate on the bridge of Toome today.

Up the narrow street he stepped, so smiling, proud and young.  
About the hemp-rope on his neck, the  
golden ringlets clung; There's ne'er a tear in his blue eyes,  
fearless and brave are they, As young Roddy  
McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

When last this narrow street he trod, his shining pike in hand  
Behind him marched, in grim array, an  
earnest stalwart band. To Antrim town! To Antrim town,  
he led them to the fray, Now young Roddy  
McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

The grey coat and its sash of green were brave and stainless then,  
A banner flashed beneath the sun  
over the marching men; The coat hath many a rent this noon,  
the sash is torn away, And Roddy McCorley  
goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

Oh, how his pike flashed in the sun! Then found a foeman's heart,  
Through furious fight, and heavy odds  
he bore a true man's part And many a red-coat bit the dust  
before his keen pike-play, But Roddy  
McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

There's never a one of all your dead more bravely died in fray  
Than he who marches to his fate in  
Toomebridge town today; True to the last! True to the last,  
he treads the upwards way, And young Roddy  
McCorley goes to die on the bridge of Toome today.

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