

My Bonnie Brown Hen

You people so witty, in country and city,
give ear to my ditty, I won't keep you long.

In trouble I tell it, no grief can excel it,
my loss it is great, though my troubles are small.

I once had a chicken, was well worth the keeping,
for eggs she was noble, as all you folks ken.

She's gone from me now and I canna tell how,
And it makes me lament for my bonny brown hen.

I called my hen Kitty, her tappin' was pretty,
It is a great pity if my hen should die.

In her neighbour's corn, when on foot or when growin',
she ne'er put her beak, but still flourished at home.

In Magilligan parish this chicken was cherished,
you need not me blame when I after her claim,

From the same place I came, William Balmer's my name,
And it makes me lament for my bonny brown hen.

For six eggs a week she brung home of the best,
Sure, my table was blessed when she entered my home,

She never would roam, but she would stay at home,
she ne'er would trespass nor o'er a wall fly.

If she had for to lay, she would keep it a day,
till she'd bring her egg to her master. But then,

She's gone from me now and I canna tell how,
And still I lament for my bonny brown hen.

My hen was true game, from French Flanders she came,
and her breed was ne'er slain in cockpit or field.

In battle or combat she never was beaten,
but her haughty opposers she forced for to yield.

Her sire was Black Neb, her dame was White Leg,
her grandfather came from the famed Johnny Glen,
She's of the same race and came from the same place,
that's why I lament for my bonny brown hen.

So now a reward to the bard or the clown,
ten pounds I will offer and I will pay it down

For one sight again of my bonny brown hen,
be she dead or alive in city or town

But the mark you must bring is a silver tipped wing,
with a tap on the head and if you see her then

Fetch her and the villain; to pay I am willin'
and then I'll rejoice at receivin' my hen