

The Banks of the Nile (Song)

The image shows a musical score for the song 'The Banks of the Nile'. It consists of eight staves of music in 3/4 time, written in treble clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols (Dm, G, Am7, C, Em) are placed above the notes to indicate the harmonic structure. The lyrics are: 'Oh, hark the drum still - beats, my love: no - lon - ger can we - stay The bug - le horn is soun ding clear and we must mar - ch a way. We're or - dered down to Ports mou - th and it's many's the wea - ry - mile To join the Bri - tish - Ar - my on the - banks - of the - Nile.'

1. Oh, hark the drum still beats, my love: no longer can we stay.
The bugle horn is sounding clear and we must march away.
We're ordered down to Portsmouth and it's many's the weary mile
To join the British Army on the banks of the Nile.

2. Oh, Willie, dearest Willie, don't leave me here to mourn.
Don't make me curse and rue the day that ever I was born,
For the parting of our love would be like parting with my life.
So stay at home, my dearest love, and I will be your wife.
3. Oh, my Nancy, dearest Nancy, sure, that would never do.
The government has ordered, and we are bound to go.
The government has ordered, and the Queen, she gives command
And I am bound on oath, my love, to serve in a foreign land.
4. Oh, but I'll cut off my yellow hair, and I'll go along with you.
I'll dress myself in uniform, and I'll see Egypt too.
I'll march beneath your banner while Fortune, it do smile
And we'll comfort one another on the banks of the Nile.
5. Your waist, it is too slender, and your fingers, they are too small
And the sultry suns of Egypt your rosy cheeks would spoil.
Where the cannons, they do rattle and the bullets, they do fly
And the silver trumpet sounds so loud: to hide the dismal cries.
6. Oh, cursed be these cruel wars, wherever they began
For they have robbed our country of many's the handsome man.
They've robbed us of our sweethearts, while their bodies, they feed the lions
On the dry and sandy deserts which are the banks of the Nile.

"The Banks of the Nile" is an Irish song in C Major and 3/4 time.

The Battle of the Nile (also known as the Battle of Aboukir Bay) was a major naval battle fought between the British Royal Navy and the Navy of the French Republic at Aboukir Bay on the Mediterranean coast off the Nile Delta of Egypt from the 1st to the 3rd of August 1798. The French fleet carried an expeditionary force under General Napoleon Bonaparte. The British fleet was led in the battle by Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson; they decisively defeated the French under Vice-Admiral François-Paul Brueys d'Aigalliers.

In this song a girl wants to go to sea with her man, who prevents her by taking shelter behind naval regulations. Other sailors must have been less persuasive or less obedient, since women were by no means strangers to navy ships in Nelson's day. At the battle of the Nile itself, women helped with carrying powder to the guns; some were wounded and one gave birth to a baby.

It appears in the Roud Folksong Index as #950.

It was printed in Laws' **American Ballads from British Broadides: A guide for students and collectors of traditional song** (1957), Greig's **Folk-Song in Buchan and Folk-Song of the North-East** (1963), **The Greig-Duncan Folk Song Collection, Volume 1** (1981), Belden's **Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society** (1955), Randolph's **Ozark Folksongs** (1982), Ord's **Bothy Songs and Ballads** (1930), Creighton's **Maritime Folk Songs** (1962), Grigson's **The Penguin Book of Ballads** (1975) and other sources.

It was recorded by Martin Carthy on **Right Of Passage** (1988), De Danann on **The Mist Covered Mountain** (1980), Old Blind Dogs on **Wherever Yet May Be** (2010), Ewan MacColl, accompanied by Peggy Seeger on guitar on **Classic Scots Ballads** (1956), The Young Tradition on **Galleries** (1968), A.L. Lloyd on **The Valiant Sailor** (1973) and Niamh Parsons on **Blackbirds & Thrushes** (1999).