

Kevin Barry

Chords for the first staff: C, F, C, G7

Chords for the second staff: F, C, G7, C, C, F, C

Chords for the third staff: G7, F, C, G7, C

1. In Mountjoy jail one Monday morning
 High upon the gallows tree,
 Kevin Barry gave his young life
 For the cause of liberty.
 Just a lad of eighteen summers,
 Still there's no one can deny,
 As he walked to death that morning,
 He proudly held his head on high.
Chorus:
 Shoot me like an Irish soldier.
 Do not hang me like a dog,
 For I fought to free old Ireland
 On that still September morn.
 All around the little bakery
 Where we fought them hand to hand,
 Shoot me like an Irish soldier,
 For I fought to free Ireland
2. Just before he faced the hangman,
 In his dreary prison cell,
 British soldiers tortured Barry,
 Just because he would not tell.
 The names of his brave comrades,
 And other things they wished to know.
 Turn informer or we'll kill you
 Kevin Barry answered "No".
Chorus
3. Proudly standing to attention
 While he bade his last farewell
 To his broken hearted mother
 Whose grief no one can tell.
 For the cause he proudly cherished
 This sad parting had to be
 Then to death walked softly smiling
 That old Ireland might be free.
Chorus
4. Another martyr for old Ireland,
 Another murder for the crown,
 Whose brutal laws may kill the Irish,
 But can't keep their spirit down.
 Lads like Barry are no cowards.
 From the foe they will not fly.
 Lads like Barry will free Ireland,
 For her sake they'll live and die.
Chorus

Kevin Gerard Barry (January 20, 1902 – November 1, 1920) was the first Irish republican to be executed by the British since the leaders of the Easter Rising in 1916. On the morning of September 20, 1920, Barry went to Mass, then joined a party of IRA volunteers on Bolton Street in Dublin. Their orders were to ambush a British army truck as it picked up a delivery of bread from the bakery, and capture their weapons. A shot was fired somewhere and Barry and the rest of the ambush party then opened fire. One of the soldiers, Private Harold Washington, aged 15, had been shot dead. Two others, Privates Marshall Whitehead and Thomas Humphries were both badly wounded and both later died of their wounds. Barry's gun jammed twice and he dived for cover under the truck. His comrades fled, and he was left behind. He was then spotted and arrested by the soldiers. Barry was sentenced to death for his part in the operation. His martyrdom resulted in the greatly increased voluntary recruitment of his fellow students into the Irish Republican Army.

There are several widely sung ballads about Kevin Barry. This one was written by Terrence Ward of The Irish Press. I learned it from the Clancy Brothers recording.

The song has been one of the most enduringly popular of Irish songs and has been largely responsible for making Kevin Barry a household name. It was said to be so popular with British troops during the Troubles that it was banned. It was one of many Irish rebel ballads removed from RTÉ playlists during the period of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

"Kevin Barry" features prominently in Frank McCourt's novel **Angela's Ashes** and in the 1999 movie adaptation of the book.

It had been performed by many Irish groups including The Wolfe Tones and The Clancy Brothers. The tune used by the Clancys is a variation of the sea shanty "Rolling Home".