

## The Star Of The County Down (Song)

The musical notation is in 4/4 time and consists of six staves. The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4
- Staff 2: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4
- Staff 3: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4
- Staff 4: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4
- Staff 5: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4
- Staff 6: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4

1. Near Banbridge town in the County Down  
 One evening last July,  
 Down a *bóithrín* green came a sweet *cailín*  
 And she smiled as she passed me by.  
 She looked so neat in her two bare feet  
 And the sheen of her nut-brown hair,  
 Such a coaxing elf, I'd to shake myself  
 To make sure I was standing there.

### Chorus

From Bantry Bay down to Derry Quay,  
 From Galway to Dublin town,  
 No maid I've seen like the fair *cailín*  
 That I met in the County Down.

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

3. She'd a soft brown eye and a look so sly  
 And a smile like a rose in June  
 And you held each note from her auburn throat  
 As she lilted lamenting tunes.  
 At the pattern dance you'd be in a trance  
 As she skipped through a jig or a reel.  
 When her eyes, she'd roll, ah she'd lift your soul  
 And your heart, she would likely steal.  
 Chorus

4. At the harvest fair she'll be surely there  
And I'll dress in me Sunday clothes,  
With my hat cocked right and me shoes shone bright  
For a smile from the nut-brown Rose.  
No horse I'll yoke, or pipe I'll smoke  
'Til the rust in my plough turn brown  
And a smiling bride by my own fireside  
Sits the star of the County Down.  
Chorus

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"Star of the County Down" also known as "*Reáilt Condae An Dún*" is an Irish ballad set near Banbridge in County Down, in Northern Ireland.

The words are by Cathal MacGarvey (1866–1927) from Ramelton, County Donegal. The tune is traditional and is known as "Dives and Lazarus" which was adapted by Ralph Vaughan Williams for The English Hymnal in 1906 as "Kingsfold".

A star, in Irish vernacular, is a beautiful woman. John Loesberg (1980) says the air originally was set to the broadsheet ballad "My Love Nell".

The oldest copy of this tune is "Guilderoy", which appears in Allan Ramsay's **Tea Table Miscellany** (c 1726). "Guilderoy" also appeared in Thomas D'Urfey's **Pills to Purge the Melancholy III** (1707), although that version is less recognizable as this tune.

It was recorded by John McCormack, The Dubliners, The Irish Rovers, Van Morrison with The Chieftains and The Pogues.

It is sometimes played as a waltz or a jig.