

Johnny Has Gone For a Soldier

The struggle and sorrow occasioned by the Revolutionary War were rarely acknowledged in song - perhaps because patriotic devotion and military zeal were felt to be more virtuous sentiments. "The American Hero" and "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier" are both exceptions. This anonymous ballad returned to popularity during later times of struggle, particularly during the Civil War.

It is a lament about having to go away to war and leave the women behind. Of course, during any war, separation between family members is inevitable, and couples part each other not knowing when or if they will see each other again. As this song states, men and women may not have liked it, but most felt it was their duty to support the war and their country. Men showed their support by fighting as soldiers, and women by sacrificing their fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons. Many families became destitute without the man as provider of the main source of income.

Acoustic Guitar

Am Em F Em Am7 Em

Here I sit on But-ter-milk Hill, Who could blame me,
 Me, oh, my, I love-d him so, Broke my heart to
 I'll sell my clock, I'll sell my reel, Likewise - I'll sell my

4 C Em Am Em F Em Dm Am

cry my fill? And ev - 'ry tear would - turn a mill
 see him go, And on - ly time will - heal my woe:
 spin - ning wheel To buy my love a sword of steel;

7 Em Am

John - ny has gone for a sol - dier.
 John - ny has gone for a sol - dier.
 John - ny has gone for a sol - dier.

4. With fife and drum I marched away,
 I could not heed what she did say,
 I'll not be back for many a day.
 Johnny has gone for a soldier.

5. I'll dye my dress, I'll dye it red,
 And through the streets I'll beg for bread,
 For the lad that I love from me has fled,
 Johnny has gone for a soldier.