

## Mick Ryan's Lament

Tim O'Brien

Well my name is Mick Ryan, I'm lyin still  
In a lonely spot near where I was killed  
By a red man defending his native land  
In the place that they call Little Big Horn

And I swear I did not see the irony  
When I rode with the Seventh Cavalry  
I thought that we fought for the land of the free  
When we rode from Fort Lincoln that morning

And the band they played the Garryowen  
Brass was shining, flags a flowin  
I swear if I had only known  
I'd have wished that I'd died back at Vicksburg

For my brother and me, we had barely escaped  
From the hell that was Ireland in forty eight  
Two angry young lads who had learned how to hate  
But we loved the idea of Amerikay

And we cursed our cousins who fought and bled  
In their bloody coats of bloody red  
The sun never sets on the bloody dead  
Of those who have chosen an empire

But we'd find a better life somehow  
In the land where no man has to bow  
It seemed right then and it seems right now  
That Paddy he died for the union

Ah, but Michael he somehow got turned around  
He had stolen the dream that he thought he'd found  
Now I never will see that holy ground  
For I turned into something I hated

And I'm haunted by the Garryowen  
Drums a beating, bugles blowin'  
I swear if I had only known  
I'd lie with my brother in Vicksburg

And the band they played that Garryowen  
Brass was shin, flags a flowin'  
I swear if I had only known, I'd lie with  
my brother at Vicksburg