

KILKELLY (by Peter and Steve Jones, 1984)

Kil-kel-ly Ire - land eight-teen and six - ty my dear and lo-ving son John, your
5
good friend the school-mas-ter Pat Mac Na-ma ra, so good as to write these words down; your
9
bro-thers have all gone to find work in Eng-land, the house is so emp-ty and sad, the crop of po - ta-toes is
14
sore-ly in-fec-ted, a third to a half of them bad. And your sis - ter Brid-get and Pat-rick O'Donn-ell are
19
going to be mar-ried in June, your mo- ther says not to work on the rail- road, and be sure to come on home soon.

Kilkelly, Ireland, eighteen and sixty
My dear and loving son, John
Your good friend the schoolmaster Pat MacNamara
So good as to write these words down
Your brothers have all gone to find work in England
The house is so empty and sad
The crop of potatoes is sorely infected
A third to half of them bad
And your sister Bridget and Patrick O'Donnell
Are going to be married in June
Your mother says not to work on the railroad
And be sure to come on home soon.

Kilkelly, Ireland, eighteen and seventy
My dear and loving son, John
Hello to your missus and to your four children
May they grow healthy and strong
Michael has got in a wee bit of trouble
I suppose that he never will learn
Because of the dampness there's no turf to speak of
And now there's nothing to burn
And Bridget is happy you named a child for her
You know she's got six of her own
You say you found work but you don't say what kind
Oh when will you be coming home?

Kilkelly, Ireland, eighteen and eighty
Dear Michael and John, my sons
I'm sorry to give you the very sad news
That your dear old mother passed on
We buried her down at the church in Kilkelly
Your brothers and Bridget were there
You don't have to worry, she died very quickly
Remember her in your prayers
And it's so good to hear that Michael's returning
With money, he's sure to buy land
For the crop has been poor and the people are selling
At any price that they can.

Kilkelly, Ireland, eighteen and ninety
My dear and loving son, John
I guess that I must be close on to eighty
It's thirty years since you've gone
Because of all of the money you've sent me
I'm still living out on my own
Michael has built himself a fine house
And Bridget's daughters are grown
Thank you for sending your family picture
They're lovely young women and men
You say that you might even come for a visit
What joy to see you again.

Kilkelly, Ireland, eighteen and ninety two
My dear brother John
I'm sorry that I didn't write sooner to tell you
That Father passed on
He was living with Bridget, she says he was cheerful
And healthy right down to the end
Ah, you should have seen him playing with the grandchildren
Of Pat MacNamara, your friend
And we buried him alongside of Mother
Down at the Kilkelly churchyard
He was a strong and a feisty old man
Considering his life was so hard
And it's funny the way he kept talking about you
He called for you at the end
Oh, why don't you think about coming to visit
We'd love to see you again.