

The Irish Boy

Flowing

Trad from Phyllis Martin

A D G D Bm G A

There sits a bird in yon-der tree Some say he's blind and can-not see Oh how I

5 F#m Bm G A G D

wish that bird was me since my true love has le - ft me And it's oh what a

9 D G D Bm G A

fool ish_ young girl was I To fall in love with an I- rish boy An I- rish

13 F#m Bm G A G D

boy he may well be But he spoke braid Scots when he coor- ted me

There sits a bird in yonder tree
Some say he's blind and cannot see
Oh how I wish that bird was me
Since my true love has left me.

And it's oh what a foolish young girl was I
To fall in love with an Irish boy
An Irish boy he may well be
But he spoke braid Scots when he courted me.

I leaned my back against an aik
Thinkin it was a trusty tree
But first it bent and then it broke
And so has my love treated me.

I wish, I wish, I wish in vain
I wish I was a maid again
But a maid again I ne'er will be
Till apples grow on an orange tree.

This is a partly (first two verses) local version of the more well known traditional song Waly Waly or The Water is Wide which has many variants. Our version was collected from Joan Cron, a fine exponent of the Galloway Irish tongue and appeared in 'Sangs Reels and High Jinks'. Another version titled Jamie Douglas has even more riddles in it – 'When cockle shells make siller bells and mussels grow on every tree, when frost and snaw shall warm us a' then I'll sit doon and dine wi' thee.' Riddles are used in songs to describe impossible events or tasks.

Activity:

Make up some of your own riddles and try teaching them to your peers.

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