

The Rifle Boys

As I walked out one eve - ning, all in the month of May In
hopes to meet my own true love I care - less - ly did stray But
all a - long on my — re - turn my love — I could not see My
heart was op - pressed. I could find no rest, For the want of lib - er - ty.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'The Rifle Boys'. It consists of four staves of music in a 2/4 time signature, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with 'As I walked out one eve - ning, all in the month of May In'. The second staff continues with 'hopes to meet my own true love I care - less - ly did stray But'. The third staff has 'all a - long on my — re - turn my love — I could not see My'. The fourth staff concludes with 'heart was op - pressed. I could find no rest, For the want of lib - er - ty.'

Up stepped a young drum beater with his well corded drum
And slowly he began to beat at the setting of the sun.
The drums did beat and rattle, the fife did play also
Which would entice each girl so nice for her rifle boy to go.

There is a lad among the rest, he's proper neat and tall,
The one who rules the money; there is he who rules them all.
He has two red and rosy cheeks, two dark and rolling eyes,
And upon my life I'll be his wife and follow the rifle boys.

Says the mother to the daughter, "What makes you talk so strange?
You ne'er shall be a soldier's wife this wide world for to range,
For soldiers are uncertain boys; right well you know their pay.
How can a man support a wife on fourteen pence a day?"

Says the daughter to the mother, "What makes you run them down?
There's many a noble young man supported by the crown,
They sail upon the deep blue sea without a dread or fear,
And if I can, I'll kill the man who dares oppose my dear."

Says the father to daughter, "I'll confine you to your room
Until such times as the rifle boys they do march out of town."
"You can bind me down for seven long weeks; one day will set me free,
Like a true young deer, my course I'll steer my rifle boy to see.

“Three roses of black ribbon, my love, I will put on,
Three roses of black ribbon for to mourn for him who’s gone.
For Black it is for grief,” she says, “and red it is for joy.
And forevermore I will adore my charming rifle boy.”

Note: This is a song my oldest brother’s wife learned in her girlhood. I have never heard it elsewhere.