

Van Dieman's Land

The musical score is written in a single system with four staves. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are placed below the notes. There are three triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above a group of notes) in the first, second, and fourth staves. The lyrics are: 'Come all you brave young hunts - men, I warn you to be - ware. When - e're you go a - hunt - ing take your dog, your gun, your snare, For lof - ty hills and moun - tains may be at your com - mand, You may be ta - ken pris - 'ner, sent to Van Die - man's Land.'

There was poor John Brown of Galway town, Pat Murphy and poor Joe,
Three of as noble seamen as ever you did know.
Till they were taken prisoner by the keeper of their land
And for seven long years transported unto Van Dieman's Land.

We have a maid on board our ship, Jane Seymour was her name,
From Dublin she was transported for the playing of a game.
The captain fell in love with her; he married her out of hand.
She gave us the best of treatment going to Van Dieman's Land.

The place we had to land upon was a far-off country shore,
The natives gathered round us, a full five hundred score,
They yoked us up like oxen and sold us out of hand,
And they tackled us to the plow, my boys, to plow Van Dieman's Land.

The place we had to sleep upon was built of mud and clay
With only a bundle of straw, my boys; a word we dare not say.
With flaming fires around us, now slumber if you can,
To keep snakes and tigers from us, down in Van Dieman's Land.

Last night as I lay on my bed I dreamed a pleasant dream.
I dreamed I was in old Ireland, down by a purling stream.
A pretty fair maid sat beside me and she on my right hand,
I woke up broken-hearted; I was in Van Dieman's Land.

Note: This song was sung by Aunt Mary's son George.

Van Dieman's Land, now Tasmania, was an auxiliary penal station under New South Wales. It is an island in the southern ocean one hundred miles south of Australia. The first settlement was made in eighteen hundred three by a guard with a body of convicts. In eighteen hundred twenty-five it became a separate province.