

WITH THE STORY TELLERS

Whose courage proved of slight avail
Against the forces of the Pale,
Drew closer in and told this tale
Of a mean officer.

Jack Burke's Story

There once was a bailiff, big, boastful and vain,
Who lived in Clonmel, in George the 3d's reign,
Who arrested a poacher, Tom Whalen by name,
And very soon after he paid for that same:
For the poacher one evening the bailiff surprised,
Who knew him not then for he was disguised;
So he took from his pocket a bottle of rye,
And invited the bailiff its contents to try:
Who drank half the rye, at least so it was said;
But the other half Whelan broke over his head,
And left the poor bailiff apparently dead;
At a point where some carters found him lying down,
And brought the poor guy with them back to town.

But after a while the story leaked out,
How Tom dealt the bailiff the devil's own clout;
While they took him at once to a hospital near,
The poacher the river could fish without fear.
But the Shoneen who purchased the fishing right
Complained to the Court of the overseer's plight,
And that his assailant more daring than ever,
Could be caught any day spearing fish in the river.

So a warrant was issued for Whelan's arrest;
But thought bailiffs and peelers this might interest,
In the light of a joke it appeared to the rest.
So the poacher was forced on his "keeping" to go.
Or a certain jail sentence he would undergo;
At least if they should but secure his arrest,
And both sheriff and bailiff swore they'd do their best.