

WITH THE STORY TELLERS

A mark for Irish kerns who
Knew every sod of ground;
Till tented streets seemed hospitals,
With wounded stretched all round.

The English at Kilkenny swore
They'd leave no foe alive;
They had four and thirty thousand,
McMurrough scarcely five.

How stubbornly that handful fought
In Wicklow's deep defiles;
Tells why it took eleven days
To cover thirty miles.*

From Carlow town to Arklow,
Each day increased their plight;
Each wood was but an ambushade,
No ridge gained but by fight;
But crossing Aughrim River,
Which was in a flooded state;
Was enough to make one shiver,
The slaughter was so great.

So when good news the troops receive,
Of vessels ready to relieve
Their wants; just as the men perceive
The sloops bearing supplies;
Into the water they madly rush,
And recklessly each other push;
In their mad haste to get some food,
Numbers are trampled in the flood,
And many a victim dies.

Defeated and crestfallen,
King Richard now retires;
Within the walls of Dublin where,
Recovered from his recent scare
Again assumes his haughty air
Proclaiming his desires.

* McGees History of Ireland.