

# BANNA'S BANKS

*Performed by:* Caroline Brennan

*Attributed to:* George Ogle

As down by Banna's banks I strayed one evening in May,  
The little birds in blithesome notes made vocal every spray;  
They sang their little tales of love, they sang them o'er and o'er,  
O gra mo chree, mo coleen og, my Molly asthore.<sup>1</sup>

I laid me down upon a bank bewailing my sad fate,  
That doomed me thus, a slave of love and cruel Molly's hate;  
How can she break the honest heart that wears her in its core,  
O gra mo chree, mo coleen og, my Molly asthore.

Oh had I all the flocks that graze on yonder yellow hill,  
Or lowed for me the numerous herds that yon green pasture fill;  
With her I'll love and gladly share my kine and fleecy store,  
O gra mo chree, mo coleen og, my Molly asthore.

You said you loved me Molly dear, ah why did I you believe,  
For who could think such tender words were meant for to deceive?  
Love was all I asked of thee, nay, heaven could ask no more,  
O gra mo chree, mo coleen og, my Molly asthore.

Oh fare you well now Molly dear, thy loss I e'er shall mourn,  
While life remains in Stephen's heart 'twill beat for thee alone;  
Though thou art false, may heaven on thee its choicest blessings pour,  
O gra mo chree, mo coleen og, my Molly asthore.

The daisy, pine and all the sweets the dawn of nature yields,  
The primrose pale, the violet blue lay scattered o'er the field,  
Such fondness in the bosom lies of her whom I adore,  
O gra mo chree, mo coleen og, my Molly asthore.

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<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: The Irish text for this line is 'Ó grá mo chroí, mo chailín óg, my Molly a stór.' The Irish language died out in Cape Shore communities by the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, though certain words remain in local dialect and in songs. In the case of this song, however, the Irish may already have been anglicised. At least some early ballad sheets include corrupted versions of the Irish language line (for example, see versions available from the Bodleian Library's Broadside Ballads Online: <http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/search/roud/4717> [accessed 5 June 2018]).