



# KelticDead Music

## Stories, Tunes and Songs in the Traditions of our Celtic Dead

To the Four Ayrts to Guide Us, and  
For the Four Winds to Get Us There!

The mission of the **KelticDead Music** initiative is to find tunes and songs from around the world that have Celtic, Folk, World, Americana, and Seafaring origins, and arrange them into simple sheet music formats for folk musicians to use and share. In addition, the KDM initiative provides the in-depth stories with possible lyrics that follow the video-based, **KDM Broadside**s for a more complete music-education experience.



## KelticDead Music Broadside

*All the selections and sheet music content provided in the **KelticDead Music** initiative are from traditional, made-public, made-public with credits, or cited credits where applicable. This material content is the personal interpretations of the subject and provided by **Patrick O-Shaun Young, KelticDead Music**.*

# Those Were The Days

**Melody from Дорогой длиною (On The Long Road)  
Modern English Lyric Credits to Eugene Raskin**

The original melody is believed to have been taken from an old, Russian gypsy tune, and composed and published by two Russian composers as a "lost love" song in 1926. Boris Ivanovich Fomin (1900-1948) composed the melody arrangement, and Konstantin Nikolayevich Podrevsky (1888-1930) created the lyrics as a short ballad of a man riding in a troika who was reminiscing about a lost love. The original title was "On The Long Road" (**Дорогой длиною**).

The melody was specifically composed to have a unique sound made by a seven-string, gypsy guitar which was even mentioned in the original ballad as семиструнную (семе-strynnou'). The ballad became immensely popular in over 40 countries.



A Russian **Troika**. A sled pulled by three horses.



**Boris Ivanovich Fomin**  
(Борис Иванович Фомин, born on 12 April 1900, Saint Petersburg, Russian Empire; died on 25 October 1948, Moscow, USSR) was a Soviet musician and composer who specialized in the Russian romance.

**Konstantin Nikolayevich Podrevsky** (Russian: Константин Николаевич Подревский; 14 January 1888 in Turinsk, Tobolsk Governorate, Russian Empire – 4 February 1930 in Moscow, USSR) was a Russian Soviet poet of Polish origin on mother's side, a translator and lyricist, co-author of more than 150 popular songs of the 1920s.



A семиструнную (семе-strynnou') 7 string gypsy guitar.

## Those Were The Days

As the Russian melody and ballad became popular throughout the world, it was also known in New York as well in the 1930s and 40s. Eugene Raskin was born in the Bronx in 1909, and he grew up hearing a version of the song from his mother. Eugene studied at Columbia University, and he eventually became an adjunct professor there between 1936 and 1976.

He and his wife, Francesca, often played folk music around Greenwich Village in New York in the 1960s as “International Balladeers” at places like the White Horse Tavern. They rewrote the theme of the song to be one of growing old and as an “old friends” song. He copyrighted both the melody and the new lyrics of the song in his own name.

They also played at “London’s Blue Angel” every year, and would close their shows with “Those Were The Days.” Paul McCartney frequented the club and was quite taken with the song, and Paul asked Eugene if he could buy the rights to it. Eugene gave it to Paul as a “made public” with credits given to Raskin.

Paul took the song back to London to his newly formed Apple Records company, where he teamed up with Mary Hopkin to perform it at Abbey Road Studios in London with a slightly different arrangement by Richard Hewson. It became an instant hit, and was number one hit on the UK Singles Chart.



A made public image of Paul McCartney on the piano, and Mary Hopkin playing the guitar in the background.

Paul was later quoted saying, “I thought it was very catchy, it had something, it was a good treatment of nostalgia ... (Mary) picked up on the tune very easily, as if she had known it for years.” The new version was eventually recorded in over twenty languages and played by many different artists, including Gene and Francesca back in New York.

Paul also recorded Mary Hopkin singing “Those were the Days” in other languages in their respective countries. In Spain, it was known as “**Qué tiempo tan Feliz;**” in West Germany as “**An jenem Tag;**” and in France as “**Le temps des fleurs.**”



The song also became a favorite within the Celtic music communities around the world. As an example, in 2009, as part of his last performance, Liam Clancey sang the song. Visit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fILx3zMHaY>

**Liam Clancy** (Irish: Liam Mac Fhlannchadha; 2 September 1935 – 4 December 2009) was an Irish folk singer from Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary.

## Those Were The Days

Lyrics of “Those were the Days” with credits given to Gene Raskin.

Once upon a time there was tavern  
Where we used to raise a glass or two.  
How we used to laugh away the hours,  
And dreamed of all the great things we could do?

### Chorus

Those were the days, my friend.  
We thought they'd never end.  
We'd sing and dance forever and a day.  
We'd lived the life we chose.  
We'd fight and never lose,  
For we were young and sure to have our way.

Then the busy years went rushing by us.  
We lost all those notions on the way.  
If by chance I'd see you in the tavern  
We'd smile at one another and we'd say,

### Chorus

Just tonight I stood before the tavern.  
Nothing seemed the way it used to be.  
In the glass I saw a strange reflection.  
Oh, was that lonely fellow really me?

### Chorus

Through the door there came familiar laughter.  
I saw you and heard you call my name.  
Oh, my friend, we're older, but no wiser,  
For in our hearts the dreams are still the same.

### Chorus

#### Added Chorus

La, la, la, la, la, la  
La, la, la, la, la, la  
La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la  
La, la, la, la, la, la  
La, la, la, la, la, la  
Those were the days, oh Yes,  
those were the days.



Our KelticDead group plays and sings the tune as much in the old traditions as possible, with some variations, such as with the six-string guitar, and the Irish-tuned, low-octave Bouzouki.

## Those Were The Days

### Those Were The Days

Melody adapted from a Russian Folk Love Melody, "On The Long Road"

Arrangement by KelticDead Music

English Variant Interpretation by Gene Raskin



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WMSx5CLgl0g>

The sheet music arrangement can be played slowly or lively, and as mentioned there are several "adaptations" of this melody for other folk songs. I used Irish-tuned, Low-Octave Bouzouki, the Asturias Mezzo C whistle and voices. **Earnie Taft** came in with his fiddle and mandolin, and **Linda King** provided the guitar support and chording for the KDM sheet music arrangement.

### KelticDead Music Initiative

is a private, on-line music-education initiative. All the music projects are recorded with live, acoustic instruments and performed in accordance with simplified sheet music arranged in eight bar formats (whenever possible) in accordance with the guidelines that are within the Celtic music traditions. For more music videos and stories visit ...

<https://www.KelticDeadMusic.org>

To receive on-line, PDF copies like this one, join the KelticDead Music Newsletter list at [KelticDeadMusic@gmail.com](mailto:KelticDeadMusic@gmail.com) . It's free. All members are blind copied to protect privacy.



**Shaun,**  
**"That KelticDead Guy"**  
**Patrick O. Young,**