

The Story of Gilbert Hendry

by George Albert Leddy

I once knew a guy, his name it was Gilbert;
A nuttier nut, than the one they call Filbert.
When he was young, something gave him the notion;
He'd fall into wealth, if he'd sail o'er the ocean.
So he boarded a steamer, one very fine morning;
And bid a farewell, to the land he was born in.

Now, he may have been dumb, but there're many that's dumber;
For he worked a free passage, by aiding the plumber.
But he got here at last, and it sure was a pity;
The shape he was in, when he reached New York City.
Why, even the statue, that guarded the bay;
Just stood there and wondered; had nothing to say.

So, he started along, down the street he was hiking;
He didn't go far, 'twas not to his liking.
He wandered along, 'til his belly was sagging;
And some other part, we won't mention, was dragging.
And as nighttime drew near, he was ready to faint;
When he met with a feller—a 'seller-of-paint.'

When the feller saw Gil, and the shape he was in:
So desperately weak, so pale, and so thin;
His heart, it was touched, as 'twould be for a brother.
So he took the lad home, to his kind-hearted Mother.
"O'woorah!" she cried, as she paused in her baking;
"I'll tend to the lad—if you're sure he's not faking!"

"Acushla!" she cried, as she clasped the weak hand
(You see, she's a daughter, of Old Ireland);
"Tho', your Forefathers tr'ated us, jest loike a pig,
Shure, I cenna do such, fer me heart is too big."
So she made him a bed, that was soft, warm and cozy;
To the down-hearted lad, things began to look rosy.

But the sun, o'er the hilltop, too soon, began peeping;
Then he slipped out of bed, he was tired of sleeping.
So he crept down the stairs, and just got to the door;
And there was the good woman, sweeping the floor.

“God forgive!” cried she, “‘Tis me be a sinner;
Should I let the lad lave me, without a foine dinner!”

So she filled up his stomach, with bacon and eggs;
Put new life in his carcass, and strength in his legs.
So he went on his way; he was blissful and happy,
As a gold-digger baby, who's found a new Pappy.

But that seller-of-paints, he has never forgotten;
Tho' times might be good, or times might be rotten;
Through times, when 'twas hard, to meet his expense,
But a seller-of-paints—he has been ever since.

Now, the Grand Duke of Windsor, he came to our land;
We greeted and cheered him, with flag and with band.
We showed him, the honor, that's due to a king,
But I'm here to tell you—it don't mean a thing.

But when Gilbert came over, as I understand:
There weren't no flags—no, not even a band;
Not even a Jew's harp, nor fiddle, nor drum.
I guess he was sorry, at first, that he'd come.

Then he got him a job, and he felt mighty fine:
Sold wallpaper and paint, and that was his line;
Sandpaper and brushes, and varnish and glue;
And sometimes, he'd give away, color-cards, too.

And now,, he is happy, not a bit does he care;
That when he came over, no music was there.
For music's no more, than a ghost, or a spook;
And we have our Gilbert—to Hell with the Duke!
