

Oh I'm a Jolly Irishman*

As sung by
Noble B. Brown

Originally in C
11-17-1946 Millsville, WI

Oh I'm a jol - ly I - rish lad, No - shi - nis - sey is me name. — I
3
hir - ed out in sec - tion three to go wind - ing on the train. — Oh they sent me out to num - ber ten, 'twas
6
there me du - ties did begin, but wherein the de - vil they all come in it near - ly racked me brain. — Oh they
9
sent me out on the up - per deck, 'twas there I thought I'd break me neck. I hung un - to the ring bolts 'til me
12
hands and feet grew lame. I could no lon - ger stand up - on me pins, 'twas then I thought of all me sins, and if
15
God will for - give me, I'll nev - er a - gain go wind - ing on the train. — Oh they want - ed me to turn a switch an'
18
[fire two box - cars in the ditch,] and the brake he called me a son of a "witch" while wind - ing on the train. —

Lyrics.

Oh, I'm a jolly Irish lad, Noshinissey is me name.
I hired out in section three to go winding on the train.
Oh they sent me out to number ten, 'twas there me duties did begin,
But where in the devil they all come in it nearly racked me brain.
Oh they sent me out on the upper deck, 'twas there I thought I'd break me neck.
I hung unto the ring bolts 'til me hands and feet grew lame.
I could no longer stand upon my pins, 'twas then I thought of all me sins,
And if God will forgive me, I'll never again go winding on the train.
Oh they wanted me to turn a switch an' [fire two box-cars in the ditch,]
And the brake he called me a son of a [witch] while winding on the train.

* ("Irishman" from HST's notes)

Critical Commentary

Editor's notes:

Randolph's text, called "Twisting on the train," was published in the Springfield, Mo. News, January 18, 1941 (Randolph 276). He does not say whether this was the first, or only, printing of the material. The woman who provided the manuscript explained, "they used to call braking on a train twisting, because they twisted the hand-brakes" (Randolph 276). Brown's version says "winding" on the train, rather than "twisting."

Alternate titles/related songs: "Twisting on the Train."

Sources:

Randolph, Vance, collector and editor. *Ozark Folksongs*. Vol. III. Columbia, Mo.: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946-50. "Twisting on the train" text only

K.G.