The Irish Ballad

Words & Music:
Tom Lehrer

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Em                                          Am      Em
About a maid I'll sing a song, sing rickety-tickety-tin,
 Am               Em                      D        Em
About a maid I'll sing a song, who didn't have her fam'ly long.
Em       Am      Em      Am
Not only did she do them wrong,
    Em       E           Em       D       Em       D           Em
She did ev'ryone of them in, them in, she did ev'ryone of them in.
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One morning in a fit of pique, sing rickety-tickety-tin,
One morning in a fit of pique, she drowned her father in the creek.
The water tasted bad for a week,
And we had to make do with gin, with gin, we had to make do with gin.

Her mother she could never stand, sing rickety-tickety-tin,
Her mother she could never stand, and so a cyanide soup she planned.
The mother died with a spoon in her hand,
And her face in a hideous grin, a grin, her face in a hideous grin.

She set her sister's hair on fire, a-Rickety-tickety-tin,
She set her sister's hair on fire, & as the smoke and flame rose high'r,
Danced around the funeral pyre,
Playin' a violin, -olin, playin' a violin.

She weighted her brother down with stones, a-Rickety-tickety-tin,
She weighted her brother down with stones, & sent him off to Davy Jones.
All they ever found were some bones,
And occasional pieces of skin, of skin, occasional pieces of skin.

One day when she had nothing to do, sing rickety-tickety-tin,
One day when she had nothing to do, she cut her baby brother in two,
And served him up as an Irish stew,
And invited the neighbors in, -bors in, invited the neighbors in.

And when at last the police came by, sing rickety-tickety-tin,
And when at last the police came by, her little pranks she did not deny.
To do so she would have had to lie,
And lying, she knew, was a sin, a sin, lying, she knew, was a sin.

My tragic tale I won't prolong, rickety-tickety-tin,
My tragic tale I won't prolong, and if you do not enjoy my song,
You've yourselves to blame if it's too long,
You should never have let me begin, begin,
You should never have let me begin.