

# *Little Old Log Cabin on my Claim*

*words by Paul Ashford (except verse 2 - traditional)*

*music: traditional Irish "Little Old Log Cabin on the Lane"*

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The early settlers were a hardy lot - braving the hardships of the trail enroute to the Promised Land - only to find themselves lonely, wet, and disillusioned upon their arrival in the Western part of our state . . . and too broke to go home again! Early settlers in Oregon Territory poured out their frustrations in this parody of the old hymn, "Beulah Land".

I've reached the land of rain and mud,  
Where flowers and trees so early bud,  
Where it rains and rains both night and day,  
For in Oregon it rains always.

Oregon, wet Oregon,  
As through thy rain and mud I run,  
I stand and look out all around,  
And watch the rain soak in the ground.  
Look up and see the waters pour,  
And wish it wouldn't rain no more.

-from the collection of Barre Toelken

Another popular song with the early settlers was "Little Old Sod Shanty on My Claim" - a variant of an old Irish song. In the late 30's and early 40's, Paul Ashford, a Seattle folklorist and musician, wrote the following parody of that old song for a series of Northwest History broadcasts which he did for the WPA. The song is still sung by his son, John Ashford, Archivist and Past President of the Seattle Folklore Society. John adds the second traditional verse.

I've been eating fish ex-clusive-ly since living on my  
 claim and such vit-tles aint the kind I love the  
 best, for down in my in-sides, I can  
 feel the rising tides, Round the lit-tle old log  
 ca-bin on my claim. Oh, the door is made of  
 drift-wood, the roof it leaks like sin.  
 Floor boards float when rain comes pour-in' in. Hark I  
 hear a geo-duck, as he nes-tles in the  
 muck, Round the little old log cabin on my claim.

Musical notation includes treble clef, common time (C), and various chords: C, G7, F, and C7 CHORUS.

How I wish some pretty girl the city would forsake,  
 To relieve me of my duties with the broom.  
 Oh, if pity she would take, why for two we'd sure make room,  
 On my little old log cabin on my claim. CHORUS