

The Roscommon Hang Woman

A bronze plaque depicting a hanging scene which is on view for all and sundry in the well-known Central Bar in the Roscommon Town Square has prompted one of Roscommon town's foremost bards to script a verse or two in which he refers to the notorious hangwoman of Roscommon fame, one Lady Betty and the associations the county has with sheep stealing. The "bard" is the one and only John Kerrigan of Circular Road and he has written thus:



The Sheep Stalers

*Have you been to the Central, in Roscommon's Market Square
On the wall there's a plaque, that would surely make you stare.
There's this owl wan, standin' on the scaffold
A hangwoman! 'twas hard to credit, I was baffled!
On askin', I was told that her name was Lady Betty,
And that she hung them, by the score, for crimes,
grave and petty.*

*Most were dropped, for the crime of sheep stalin'
What could they do? when their children were ailin'
Who could blame them, their choices were narrow
Ate mate today, and swing for it tomorrow
When all's said and done, there was no shame
Wasn't that how the SHEEP STALERS got their name.*

— JOHN KERRIGAN