

“Yankee Doodle”

Why did yankee doodle stick a feather in his hat and call it macaroni? Back in Pre-Revolutionary America when the song "Yankee Doodle" was first popular, the singer was not referring to the pasta "macaroni" in the line that reads "stuck a feather in his hat and called it macaroni". "Macaroni" was a fancy ("dandy") style of Italian dress widely imitated in England at the time. So by just sticking a feather in his cap and calling himself a "Macaroni" (a "dandy"), Yankee Doodle was proudly proclaiming himself to be a country bumpkin, because that was how the English regarded most colonials at that time. But times have long since changed, and it is important to reflect on the fact that despite the turbulent early relationship between England and the American colonists, our two countries are strongly united.

Father and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Gooding;
And there we saw the men and boys,
As thick as hasty pudding.

Yankee doodle, keep it up,
Yankee doodle dandy;
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy.

There was Captain Washington
Upon a slapping stallion,
A-giving orders to his men,
I guess there was a million.

And then the feathers on his hat,
They looked so' tarnal fin-a,
I wanted pockily to get
To give to my Jemima.

And then we saw a swamping gun,
Large as a log of maple;
Upon a deuced little cart,
A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shoot it off,
It takes a horn of powder;
It makes a noise like father's gun,
Only a nation louder.

I went as nigh to one myself,
As' Siah's underpinning;
And father went as nigh agin,
I thought the deuce was in him.

We saw a little barrel, too,
The heads were made of leather;
They knocked upon it with little clubs,
And called the folks together.

And there they'd fife away like fun,
And play on cornstalk fiddles,
And some had ribbons red as blood,
All bound around their middles.

The troopers, too, would gallop up
And fire right in our faces;
It scared me almost to death
To see them run such races.

Uncle Sam came there to change
Some pancakes and some onions,
For' lasses cake to carry home
To give his wife and young ones.

But I can't tell half I see
They kept up such a smother;
So I took my hat off, made a bow,
And scampered home to mother.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,
I thought he would have cocked it;
It scared me so I streaked it off,
And hung by father's pocket.

And there I saw a pumpkin shell,
As big as mother's basin;
And every time they touched it off,
They scampered like the nation.

Yankee doodle, keep it up,
Yankee doodle dandy;
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy