

**Men of Harlech** is the Regimental Quick March of The Royal Welsh. This well-known Welsh ballad was adopted by the South Wales Borderers in 1881. It was also (with altered tempo) the Slow March of The Welch Regiment. In 1969 it was adopted by The Royal Regiment of Wales (24th/41st Foot) as the Regimental Quick March when the two regiments merged.

As with so many venerable tunes, its composer is unknown. It appears in print in 1794 when it was included in *the Musical and Poetical Relics of the Welsh Bards*, compiled by the celebrated Welsh harpist, Edward Jones. It may seem paradoxical that two South Wales regiments should select an essentially North Wales melody, while their North Wales counterpart, The Royal Welch Fusiliers, should prefer a South Wales one for their Slow March ('War March of the Men of Glamorgan'). This latter march is now the Slow March of the present regiment – The Royal Welsh.

It is highly unlikely that soldiers defending Rorke's Drift on 22nd/23rd January 1879, as portrayed in the 1964 movie 'Zulu', sang 'Men of Harlech'. The Regimental Quick March of the 24th (2nd Warwickshire) Regiment at the time of the Zulu war was 'The Warwickshire Lads'. This tune was written by composer and dramatist, Charles Dibdin, for the Shakespeare celebration in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1769 and originally called 'The Warwickshire Lad'.

#### **Old words (translated from Welsh)**

Dauntless sons of Celtic sires, whose souls the love of freedom fires; Hark!  
Every harp to war inspires on bold Snowdonia's side!  
Shall heart rending sounds of woe be heard where Conway's waters flow? Or  
Shall a rude and ruthless foe a willing slave here find?

From the hill and valley, from the mountain hoary  
From Plinlimon's haughty brow, around your prince ye rally!  
Harlech! From thy frowning tow'rs pour forth thy never failing pow'rs rouse  
Heroes! Glory shall be yours; March on, your country's pride

Now to battle they are going, every heart with courage flowing,  
Pride and passion over flowing in the furious strive  
Lo! the din of war engages, vengeance crowns the hate of ages,  
Sternly foe with foe engages, feeding death with life!

With their lances flashing, warriors wild are crashing,  
Through the tyrants serried ranks, whilst onwards they are dashing  
Now the enemy is flying, trampling on the dead and dying  
Victory aloft is crying, Cambria wins the field.

#### **Modern Words used by Regimental Band of The Royal Welsh**

Tongues of fire on Idris flaring, news of foe-men near declaring,  
to heroic deeds of daring, call you Harlech men

Shall the voice of wailing, now be unavailing,  
You to rouse who never yet in battles hour were failing,  
His our answer crowds down pouring swift as winter torrents roaring,  
Not in vain the voice imploring, call on Harlech men

Groans of wounded peasants drying, wails of wives and children flying,  
for the distant succour crying, call you Harlech men.

Loud the martial pipes are sounding every manly heart is bounding  
As our trusted chief surrounding, march we Harlech men.

Mothers cease your weeping, calm may be your sleeping,  
you and yours in safety now the Harlech men are keeping,

**More Interesting Facts**  
**Regimental March – Men of Harlech words**  
**Fact Sheet: 10-S05-03**  
**Page: 2 of 2**

ere the sun is high in heaven they you fear by panic riven shall like frightened  
sheep be driven, far by Harlech men

Short the sleep the foe is taking, ere the morrows morn is breaking,  
They shall have a rude awaking, roused by Harlech men.

