

# Ballad: Lieutenant-Colonel Flare

In the ballad "Lieutenant-Colonel Flare," the narrator celebrates an unparalleled military unit headed by Colonel Flare, distinguished not by martial prowess but by brotherly love and moral integrity. Unlike typical soldiers, Colonel Flare's men are depicted as innocuous and gentle, abstaining from vices common among their ilk, embodying innocence to the extent of engaging in activities like tatting or doll-nursing — pursuits far removed from the conventional soldierly demeanor.

Colonel Flare's leadership philosophy is rooted in promoting kindness, charity, and the importance of deeds over preaching. He champions giving without reservation, advocating for the virtue of generosity even at the risk of being deceived. This benevolence is mirrored in his financial dealings with his troops and his personal sacrifices; despite his own modest earnings (merely a groat), he ensures his soldiers are well-compensated (each receiving a five-pound note daily) and fed luxuriously, while he himself subsists on more modest means.

The poem further illuminates Colonel Flare's character through his approach to his own financial arrangement with his men. In an act of solidarity and humility, he exchanges his inferior provisions for their richer ones, thus sharing in their better fortune while simultaneously redistributing his own scant resources among them. This act of reciprocity underlines a communal spirit, further emphasizing the Colonel's selflessness.

Beyond his duties as a military leader, Colonel Flare is depicted as a chivalrous figure, embodying a form of nobility not conferred by title but demonstrated through actions. His readiness to extend help, advice, and emotional support without discrimination reflects a profound commitment to the welfare of others. This kindness is not limited by social distinctions, pointing to a deep-seated belief in equality and the inherent

value of every individual.

The ballad thus paints Lieutenant-Colonel Flare not merely as a military officer but as a paragon of virtue, whose influence and deeds transcend the typical bounds of his role. Through his example, the poem advocates for a conception of leadership and strength that is rooted in compassion, moral integrity, and a profound commitment to the well-being of others, making the ballad a testament to the enduring importance of benevolence and charity.



Summaryer