

SONGS OF THE SEA

Pirated from the Corners of Earth and Internet

By John Alberti

For Rainy Camp 2018



The Lady Washington and Hawaiian Chieftain

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Arranged in the order that a sailor might perform the underlying tasks on a voyage.

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The Leavin' of Liverpool

Fare thee well my own true love
I am going far away
I am bound for California
And I know that I'll return some day.

Chorus:

*So fare thee well, my own true love
For when I return united we will be
It's not the leavin' of Liverpool that grieves me
But my darling when I think of thee*

I have signed on a Yankee clipper ship,
The Davy Crockett is her name.
William Burgess is the Captain of her
And they that she's a floating Hell.

Chorus:

I have sailed with Burgess once before,
And I think I know him well.
If a man is a seaman he can get along,
But if not he is sure in Hell.

Chorus:

I am bound for California
By the way of the stormy Cape Horn.
And I will send you a letter, my love,
When I am homeward bound.

Chorus:

The sun is setting on the Harbor, love,
And I wish I could remain,
And I know it will be some long time
For that I am homeward bound

Chorus:

Pleasant and Delightful

It was pleasant and delightful on a midsummer's morn
And the green fields and the meadows were all covered in corn;
And the blackbirds and thrushes sang on every green tree
And the larks they sang melodious at the dawning of the day,
And the larks they sang melodious (3x) at the dawning of the day.

Now a sailor and his true love were a-walking one day.
Said the sailor to his true love, "I am bound far away.
I'm bound for the East Indies where the load cannons roar
And I'm bound to leave you Nancy, you're the girl that I adore,
And I'm bound to leave you Nancy (3x) you're the girl that I adore."

"Fare thee well my dearest Nancy, I must be on my way,
For our topsails they are hoisted and the anchors aweigh,
And the good ship she lies waiting for the next flowing tide,
And if ever I return again, I will make you my bride,
And if ever I return again (3x), I will make you my bride."

Then the ring from off her finger she instantly drew,
Saying, "Take this, my dearest William, and my heart will go too."
And as they were embracing tears from her eyes fell,
Saying, "May I go along with you?" "Oh no, my love, farewell,"
Saying, "May I go along with you?" (3x) "Oh no, my love, farewell,"

Capstan Shanties

First order of business: Hoist the anchor – long, heavy work at the capstan. Most any song in 4/4 time would work. Shore side marches were sometimes used. Stan Hugill reports that “Marching through Georgia” was popular in the late 19th century – probably less so on ships out of Savannah or Mobile Bay than on New England Ships.

Trainees at the capstan bars, American Tall Ship Rose, 2000



Away Rio

We'll man the good capstan and run her around.

Refrain: Away Rio

We'll haul up the anchor from out in the sound.

*Chorus: And we're bound for the Rio Grande
And it's away Rio
Away down Rio
So fare thee well my pretty young girls
And we're bound for the Rio Grande*

So it's pack up your donkey and get under way,
Away Rio
The girls we are leaving can take our half pay.
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Capstan Shanties

We've a jolly good ship and a jolly good crew,
Away Rio
A jolly good mate and a good skipper, too.
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Say goodbye to Sally and goodbye to Sue,
Away Rio
And you at the pier head, it's goodbye to you,
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Goodbye and farewell to you ladies of town,
Away Rio
We've left you enough for to buy a silk gown,
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Now fill up your glasses and sing fare you well,
Away Rio
To all the young lasses who love you so well,
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Heave with a will and heave long and strong,
Away Rio
Sing the good chorus, for 'tis a good song.
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

The anchor is weighed and the sails they are set,
Away Rio
The maids we are leaving we'll never forget,
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Our good ship's a-sailin' out over the bar
Away Rio
And we'll point her bow for the South-er-on Star
And we're bound for the Rio Grande. . . .

Cape Cod Girls

Strictly speaking, one heaves (or pushes) on the capstan bars and hauls (or pulls) on a line. The old time sailors didn't always speak so strictly, however, so this capstan shanty has the sailors hauling. It can be sung "Heave away,...", but doesn't quite sound right to me. It could be used as a hand-over-hand halyard shanty, too.

1. Cape Cod girls ain't got no combs,
Refrain: Haul away, haul away!
They combs their hair with a cod fish bone.
Chorus: And we're bound away for Australia!

2. So heave her up me bully, bully boys.
Haul away, haul away!
Heave her up and don't ye make a noise,
And we're bound away...

3. Cape Cod cats don't have no tails,
Haul away, haul away!
Lost them all in southeast gales.
And we're bound away...

4. Cape Cod kids don't have no sleds,
Haul away, haul away!
They slide down hills on cod fish heads.
And we're bound away...

5. Cape Cod ladies don't have no frills,
Haul away, haul away!
They're plain and skinny as codfish gills.
And we're bound away...

6. Cape Cod folks don't have no ills,
Haul away, haul away!
They cures them all with Codfish pills.
And we're bound away...

South Australia

This capstan shanty has the sailors both heaving AND hauling. It doesn't really matter. It might, also serve as a pumping or windlass shanty, in which case alternate heaving and hauling would be just the thing.

In South Australia I was born
To me heave away, haul away
In South Australia round Cape Horn

Chorus

We're bound for South Australia
Haul away you rolling kings
To me heave away, haul away
Haul away, you'll hear me sing
We're bound for South Australia

2. As I walked out one morning fair
To me heave away, haul away
'Twas there I met Miss Nancy Blair
Chorus

3. I shook her up and I shook her down
To me heave away, haul away
I shook her round and round the town
Chorus

4. There ain't but one thing grieves me mind
To me heave away, haul away
To leave Miss Nancy Blair behind
Chorus

5. And as we go sailin' 'round Cape Horn
To me heave away, haul away
You'll wish to God you'd never been born
Chorus

6. South Australia's a bloody fine place.
To me heave away, haul away
To get blind drunk is no disgrace.
Chorus

7. In South Australia my native land
To me heave away, haul away
Full of thieves and fleas and sand
Chorus

Paddy, Lay Back

Traditional - Lyrics from *Shanties from the Seven Seas*, by Stan Hugill

'Twas a cold an' dreary mornin' in December, (December)
An' all of me money it was spent (spent, spent),
Where it, dear Lord, went I can't remember (remember),
So down to the shippin' office went, (went, went),

Chorus: Paddy, lay back (Paddy, lay back)!
Take in yer slack (take in yer slack)!
Take a turn around the capstan - heave a pawl – (heave a pawl!)
'Bout ship, stations, boys, be handy (we're handy)!
For we're bound for Valaparaiser 'round the Horn!

That day there wuz a great demand for sailors (for sailors),
For the Colonies and for 'Frisco and for France (France, France),
So I shipped aboard a Limey barque the Hotspur (the Hotspur),
An' got paralytic drunk on my advance ('vance, 'vance),

Chorus:

I woke up in the mornin' sick an' sore, boys
An' knew I wuz outward bound again;
When I heard a voice a-bawlin' at the door-o,
'Lay aft, men, an' answer to yer names!

Chorus:

'Twas on the quarterdeck where first I saw 'em,
A sorrier lot I'd niver seen afore;
For there wuz a bum an' a stiff from every quarter,
An' it made me poor ol' heart feel sick an' sore.

Chorus:

There wuz Spaniards an' Dutchmen an' Rooshians,
An' Johnny Crapoos jist acrosst from France;
An' most o' 'em couldn't speak a word o' English,
But answered to the name of 'Month's Advance'.

Chorus:

I wisht I wuz in the 'Jolly Sailor',
Along with Irish Kate a-drinkin' beer;
An' then I thought what jolly chaps were sailors,
An' with me flipper I wiped away a tear.

Capstan Shanties

Chorus:

I axed the mate a-which a-watch wuz mine-O,
Sez he, 'I'll soon pick out a-which is which';
An' he blowed me down an' kicked me hard a-stern-O,
Callin' me a lousy, dirty son-o'-a-[fish].

Chorus:

I quickly made me mind up that I'd jump 'er,
I'd leave the beggar an' git a job ashore;
I swum across the Bay an' went an' left 'er,
An' in the English Bar I found a [lady].

Chorus:

But Jimmy the Wop he knew a thing or two, sir,
An' soon he'd shipped me outward bound again;
On a Limey to the Chinchas for guanner, boys,
An' soon was I a-roarin' this refrain.

Chorus:

So there wuz I once more again at sea, boys,
The same ol' ruddy business over again;
Oh, stamp the caps'n round an' make some noise, boys,
An' sing again this dear ol' sweet refrain.

Chorus:

Rowing Shanties

Before the introduction of steam tugs in the mid 19th century, an onshore wind meant the sailors had to get the ship away from shore to gain enough sea room clear shoals and rocks with a ship that could barely sail above a beam reach. They would launch the gig or long boat and either haul the kedge anchor out to seaward and set it so the crew could “kedge off” using the capstan, or tow the ship off shore directly.

Trainees at the Sweeps aboard the Alix Thorne, Captain’s gig, from American Tall Ship Rose, 2000



The Liverpool Judies

The title is a typical sailor’s play on words. The generic name for a girl met casually at the docks was “Judy”. (A sailor’s true love was, “Nancy”). Just as sailors would dislike leaving their Judies, and might try to stay on shore, unfavorable winds that kept the ship ashore (evidently not uncommon in Liverpool) were known as “Liverpool Judies”.

From Liverpool to 'Frisco a-rovin' I went,
For to stay in that country was my good intent.
But drinkin' strong whiskey like other damn fools,
Oh, I soon got transported back to Liverpool, singin'.

Chorus:

Rowing Shanties

Row, row, row bullies, row!

Them Liverpool judies have got us in tow.

2. A smart Yankee packet lies out in the Bay,
A-waitin' a fair wind to get under way.
With all of her sailors so sick and so sore,
They'd drunk all their whiskey and can't get no more.
Chorus:

3. Oh, here comes the mate in a hell of a stew.
He's lookin' for work for us sailors to do.
Oh, it's ``Fore tops'l halyards!" he loudly does roar,
And it's lay aloft Paddy, ye son-o'-a-whore!
Chorus:

4. One night of Cape Horn I shall never forget,
'Tis oft-times I sighs when I think of it yet.
She was divin' bows under with her sailors all wet,
She was doin' twelve knots wid her mainskys'l set.
Chorus:

5. And now we are haulin' way on to the Line,
When I thinks of it now, sure, we had a good time.
Them sea-boys box-haulin' them yards all around
For to beat that flash packet called the Thatcher MacGowan.
Chorus:

6. And now we've arrived in the Bramleymoor Dock,
And all them flash judies on the pierhead do flock.
The barrel's run dry and our five quid advance,
And I guess it's high time for to git up and dance.
Chorus:

7. Here's a health to the Captain wherever he may be,
A bucko on land and a bully at sea,
But as for the chief mate, the dirty ol' brute,
We hope when he dies straight to hell he'll skyhoot.
Chorus:

Short Haul Shanties

Hauling up the anchor leaves the ship weathercocked, head to wind. She needs to bear off to a course where her sails can fill. To that end, the next job is to hoist the jibs and fore stays'ls. If the intent is to bear off onto port tack, then these are backed to starboard to push the bow to port, then sheeted in on port tack when the bow has swung about 4 points to port.

As the ship bears farther off the wind, the main and mizzen stays'ls can be set, if the intent is to sail upwind.

These sails are light and can be hoisted quickly by a few crew members. A short haul shanty is a good accompaniment. Shantymen often made short haul shanties into longer haul shanties by adding verses until the job was done, so the distinction between long and short haul is blurred

Trainees "sweating up" a boat tackle fall, American Tall Ship Rose, 2000



Often tuneless shoutouts like, "two-SIX" or "Black-Label-RUM", with the haul on "SIX" or "RUM" are used to "sweat up" a sail, bow line, etc. These were used at the end of a halyard shanty to tighten the luff of a stays'l or to finish raising a jammed yard. One sailor belayed the "tail", while one or more others threw their weight away from the taught line, then, pulled it like a bow string to stop their momentum, producing tremendous tension in the line.

Boney

Boney was a warrior
Away, a- yah!
A warrior and a terrier
*Jean Francois!**

2. Boney fought the Russians
Away, a- yah!
The Russians and the Prussians.
Jean Francois!

Short Haul Shanties

3. Boney went to Waterloo

Away, a- yah!

There he got his overthrew.

Jean Francois!

4. Away in Saint Helena,

Away, a- yah!

Boney broke his heart and died

Jean Francois!

Bully in the Alley

Also used for screwing cotton (per Stan Hugill)

So, help me Bob, I'm bully in the alley,

Way, hay, bully in the alley!

So, help me Bob, I'm bully in the alley,

Bully down in "Shinbone AI"!

Sally am de gal that I love dearly,

Way, hay, bully in the alley!

Sally am de gal, that I spliced nearly,

Bully down in "Shinbone AI"!

For seven long years, I courted Sally

Way, hay, bully in the alley!

But all she did was dilly dally

Bully down in "Shinbone AI"!

I'll leave my Sal, and I'll become a sailor

Way, hay, bully in the alley!

I'll leave my Sal an' an' ship aboard whaler

Bully down in "Shinbone AI"!

When I come home, I'll marry Sally

Way, hay, bully in the alley!

We'll have kids and count 'em by the tally

Bully down in "Shinbone AI"!

John Cherokee

John Cherokee was an Indian man

Alabama John Cherokee

He run away every time he can

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee

2. They put him aboard a Yankee ship

Alabama John Cherokee

Again he gave the boss the slip

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee

3. They catch him again and chain him tight

Alabama John Cherokee

And starve him many a day and night

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee

4. Nothing to drink and nothin to eat

Alabama John Cherokee

He just fall dead at the boss's feet

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee

5. So they bury him by the old gate post

Alabama John Cherokee

The very same day you can see his ghost

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee, way, hey, yah

Alabama John Cherokee

Halyard and Long haul Shanties

Used to hoist the square sail yards for reaching or running before the trade winds. These can weigh thousands of pounds with wet sails.

Trainees on the main tops'l halyard, American Tall Ship Rose, 2000



Blow the Man Down, Liverpool Policeman Version

Tops'l Halyard Shanty per Stan Hugill

I'm a saltwater sailor just home from Hong Kong

Refrain: T'me way hey, blow the man down

Give me some grog or I'll sing youse a song

Chorus: Give me some time to blow the man down

Says he you're a Black Baller by the cut of your hair

T'me way hey...

Says he you're a Black Baller by the clothes that youse wear

Give me...

You've signed on some packet what flies the Black Ball

T'me way hey...

And you,ve some poor Dutchman of boots, clothes and all.

Give me...

Oh policeman, oh policeman, youse do me great wrong

T'me way hey...

I'm a Flying Fish sailor, just home from Hong Kong.

Give me...

Halyard and Long haul Shanties

So I spat in his face an' I stove in his jaw.
T'me way hey...
Says he, "young feller yer breakin' the law."
Give me...

They gave me six months in Liverpool town
T'me way hey...
Fer kickin' an' bootin' an' blowin' 'im down
Give me...

We're a Liverpool ship wid a Liverpool crew
T'me way hey...
A Liverpool mate an' 'scouse skipper, too,
Give me...

We're Liverpool born an' Liverpool bred,
T'me way hey...
Thick in the arm, boys, an' thick in the head.
Give me...

So blow the man down, bullies, blow the man down,
T'me way hey...
We're a crew of hard cases from Liverpool town.
Give me...

Haul Away, Joe

When I was a little lad,
So my mother told me,
Refrain: Away, haul away,
O, haul away together,
That if I did not kiss the girls
My lips would grow moldy
Chorus: Away, haul away,
O, haul away, Joe!

So first I loved a German girl,
But she was fat and lazy,
Away, haul away,
O, haul away together,
Next I loved an Irish girl
She drove me damn near crazy.
Away, haul away,
O, haul away, Joe!

Then I loved a Spanish girl,

Halyard and Long haul Shanties

But she was proud and haughty.

Away, haul away,

O, haul away together,

Then I loved a Frenchy girl,

And, Oh, but she was naughty.

Away, haul away,

O, haul away, Joe!

Away, haul away,

O, haul away together,

Away, haul away,

O, haul away, Joe!

King Louis was the king of France

Before the revolution, [rev-o-loo-say-an]

Away, haul away,

O, haul away together,

Then he got his head chopped off

Which spoiled his constitution [con-sti-too-say-an]

Away, haul away,

O, haul away, Joe!

Away, haul away,

O, haul away together,

Away, haul away,

O, haul away, Joe!

Congo River

1. Oh was you ever on the Congo River

Blow boys blow!

Where the fever makes the white man shiver

Blow me bullyboys blow!

2. A Yankee ship came down the river

Blow boys blow!

Her masts and yards they shone like silver

Blow me bullyboys blow!

3. What do think she had for cargo

Blow boys blow!

Why black sheep that had run the embargo

Blow me bullyboys blow!

4. And what do you think they had for dinner

Blow boys blow!

Halyard and Long haul Shanties

Why belayin' pin hash an' a roll in the scupper
Blow me bullyboys blow!

5. Yonder comes the Arrow packet
Blow boys blow!
She fires her guns can't you hear the racket
Blow me bullyboys blow!

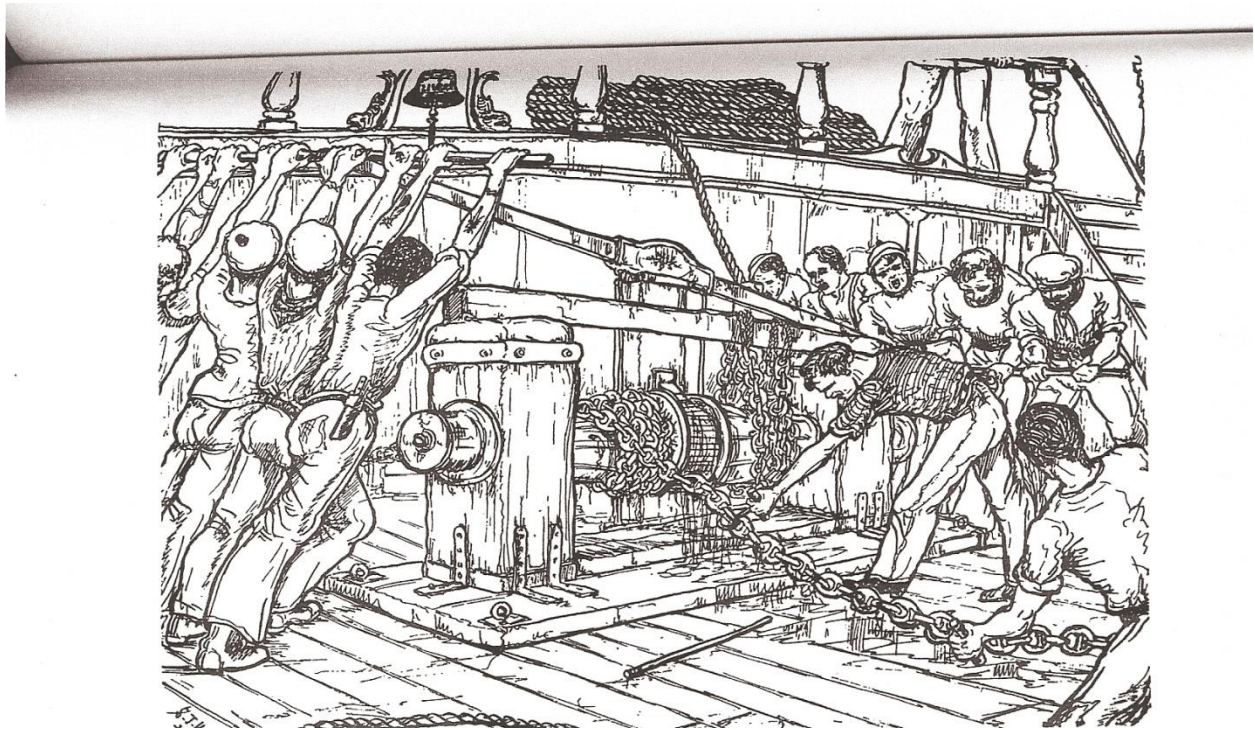
6. Who do you think was the skipper of her
Blow boys blow!
Why Bully Hayes the sailor robber
Blow me bullyboys blow!

7. Who do think was the first mate of her
Blow boys blow!
Why Shanghai Brown from Hells half-acre
Blow me bullyboys blow!

8. So blow me boys and blow forever
Blow boys blow!
Why blow me down the Congo River
Blow me bullyboys blow!

This shanty originated on the West Africa run, during the days of the slave trade. Later, with the Congo River stanzas dropped, it passed into use on the Atlantic packets. The skipper's name is variously as Bully Hayes, Bully Simms and One-Eyed Kelly. The stanza about the packet-ship firing its guns may date from the American Civil War or may refer to an anti-slavery patrol. Courtesy of David Earl

Sailors at the old-fashioned Brake Windlass – courtesy of Shanties from the Seven Seas, Stan Hugill



HEAVE AWAY, ME JOHNNIES

This song is in 6/8 time to allow for the second effort required to press the handle overhead on the up stroke and below shoulder height on the down stroke.

Oh as I walked out one summer's morn, down by the Salthouse Docks,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

I met an emigrant Irish girl conversing with Tapscott,

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go.

Good morning Mr. Tapscott, Good morning my gal, says he.

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

It's, have you got any packet ships all bound for Amerikee?

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go.

Oh yes, I've got a packet ship, I have got one or two,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

I've got the 'Jinny Walker' and I've got the 'Kangaroo'.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go.

I've got the 'Jinny Walker', and today she do set sail,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

With five and fifty emigrants and a thousand bags of meal.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go.

The day was fine when we set sail, but night had barely come,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

But every lubber never ceased to wish himself at home.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go..

That night as we was sailing through the Channel of Saint James,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

A dirty nor'west wind come up and blew us back again.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go..

We snugged her down and laid her to, with reefed main topsail set,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

It was no joke, I tell you, 'cause our bunks and clothes was wet.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go.

It cleared up fine at break of day, and we set sail once more,

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

And every mother's son was glad when we reached Amerikee's shore.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go..

'Twas at the Castle Gardens, oh, they landed me ashore

Heave away, me Johnnies, heave away!

And if I marry a yankee boy, I'll cross the seas no more.

Heave away me Johnny boys...we're all bound to go.

Furling Shanties

Trainees tucking in a sea furl, underway in the main course and tops'l, American Tall Ship Rose, 2000



Clear Away the Track and Let The Bulgine Run

I don't know that this was ever used for furling or tossing the bunting, but it would suit the hand-over-hand, dog-paddle motion of gathering the bunting into a furl. The lyrics deal with later 19th century packet ships that had both sail and steam power. "Bulgine" was slang for a locomotive or steam engine. When the wind died or was unfavorable, it was necessary to clear away (furl) the sails so the bulgine could propel the ship to its destination.

Oh! The smartest packet ye can find,
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
Is the Margaret Evans of the Blue Cross Line!
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!

Chorus:

*To me Hey, Rig-a-jig, in a low back car!
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
With Eliza Lee all on my knee,
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!*

2. Oh! The Margaret Evans of the Blue Cross Line!,
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
She's never a day behind her time!
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!

Chorus:

3. O, we're outward bound for New York Town,
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
Them bowery gals we'll waltz around.
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!

Chorus:

4. When we've stowed our freight at the West Street Pier,
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
It's home to Liverpool then we'll steer.
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!

Chorus:

5. When we all gets back to Liverpool town,
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
I'll stand ye whiskies all around.
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!

Chorus:

6. O, when I gets home across the sea,
Ah Hey! Ah Ho! Are you most done?
Eliza, will you marry me?
So clear away the track an' let the bulgine run!

Chorus:

Fore Bitters, No Work Required

Trainees on the fore deck, sitting on the bitts, or whatever they could find, between watches

American Tall Ship Rose, 2000



Strike the Bell

Scottish Traditional: Ring the Bell, Watchman

Could be used at capstan.

Up on the poop deck and walking about,
There is the second mate so steady and so stout;
What he is a-thinkin' of he doesn't know himself
And we wish that he would hurry up and strike, strike the bell.

Chorus:

*Strike the bell second mate, let us go below;
Look well to windward you can see it's gonna blow;
Look at the glass, you can see it has fell,
Oh we wish that you would hurry up and strike, strike the bell.*

2. Down on the main deck and workin' at the pumps,
There is the larboard watch just longing for their bunks;
Look out to windward, you can see a great swell,
And we wish that you would hurry up and strike, strike the bell.

Chorus:

3. Forward on the fo'c's'l head and keepin' sharp lookout,
There is Johnny standin', a-longin' fer to shout,
Lights' a-burnin' bright sir and everything is well,
And he's wishin' that the second mate would strike, strike the bell.

Chorus:

4. Aft at the wheelhouse old Anderson stands,
Graspin' at the helm with his frostbitten hands,
Lookin' at the compass through the course is clear as hell
And he's wishin' that the second mate would strike, strike the bell.

Chorus:

5. Aft on the quarter deck our gallant captain stands,
Lookin' out to windward with a spyglass in his hand,
What he is a-thinkin' of we know very well,
He's thinkin' more of shortenin' sail than strikin' the bell.

Chorus:

Bell Bottom Trousers

Once there was a waitress in the Prince George Hotel
Her mistress was a lady and her master was a swell
They knew she was a simple girls, and lately from the farm
And so they watched her very carefully to keep her from all harm.

Chorus:

*Singing a-bell bottom trousers, coats o' navy blue
Let'im climb the riggin' like 'is daddy used to do!*

2. The Forty Second Fusiliers came marchin' in to town
And with them came a compliment of rapists of renown
They battered every maidenhead that came within their spell
But they never got the waitress from the Prince George Hotel.

Chorus:

3. Next come a company of the Prince of Wales Hussars
The piled into the whorehouse and they packed along the bars
Many a maid and mistress and wife before them fell
But they never got the waitress at the Prince George Hotel.

Chorus:

4. One day there came a sailor, an ordinary bloke
A-bulging at the trousers with a heart of solid oak
At sea without a woman these seven years or more
There wasn't any need to ask what he's a-lookin' for,

Chorus:

5. He asked her for a candlestick to light his way to bed
He asked for a pillow to rest his weary head
And speaking very gently just as if he meant no harm
He asked her if she'd come to bed just to keep him warm.

Chorus:

6. She lifted up the blanket and moment there did lie
He was on her, he was in her, in the twinkling of an eye
He was out again and in again and ploughing up a storm
But all that she could say to him, was, "I hope you're keepin' warm!"

Chorus:

*7. Early in the morning the sailor lad arose
Saying, Here's a two pound note, my dear, for the damage I have wrote.
If you have a daughter, bounce 'er on your knee;
If you have a son, send the bastard off to sea!*

Chorus:

8. Now she sits beside the dock, a baby on her knee
Waiting for the sailing ships a-comin' home from sea
Looking for the jolly tars in navy uniforms
And all she wants to do, my boys, is keep the Navy warm!

Chorus:

Sailor's Prayer

Tom Lewis

This dirty town has been my home since last time I was sailing
But I'll not stay another day; I'd sooner be out whaling.

Chorus:

*Oh Lord above; send down a dove,
With beak as sharp as razors
To cut the throat of them there blokes
Who sells bad beer to sailors.*

2. Paid off me score and them ashore, me money soon was flying
With Judy Lee upon my knee in my ear a lying,

Chorus:

3. With my new-found friends, my money spends just as fast as winking
But when I make to clean the slate, the landlord says, "Keep Drinking".

Chorus:

4. With me money gone and clothes in pawn and Judy set for leaving
Six months of pay gone in three days, but Judy isn't grieving.

Chorus:

5. When the crimp comes round, I'll take his pound and his hand I'll be shaking
Tomorrow morn sail for the Horn just as dawn is breaking.

Chorus:

6. So for one last trip from port I'll ship but next time back I'm swearing
I'll settle down in my hometown and go no more seafaring.

Chorus:

Spanish Ladies

Farewell and adieu to you, Spanish ladies,
Farwell and adieu to you, ladies of Spain;
For we've received orders for to sail to old England;
But we hope in a short time to see you again.

*Chorus: We'll rant and we'll roar like true British sailors,
We'll rant and we'll roar across the salt seas,
Until we strike soundings in the channel of old England,
From Ushant to Scilly is thirty five leagues.*

Then we hove our ship to with the wind at sou'west, boys,
We hove our ship to, for to strike soundings clear;
We got soundings in ninety-five fathom, and boldly
Up the channel of old England our course we did steer.

Chorus:

Now the first land we made it is called the Deadman,
Then, Ramshead off Plymouth, Start, Portland, and Wight;
We passed by Beechy, by Fairleigh and Dungeness,
And hove our ship to, off South Foreland Light.

Chorus:

Then a signal was made for the grand fleet to anchor,
All in the Downs, that night for to meet
Then stand by your stoppers, let go your shank-painters,
Haul all your clew garnets, stick out tacks and sheets.

Chorus:

Now let every man drink off his full bumper
Let every man toss off his full glass;
We'd rather be jolly, than drown melancholy,
So here's a good health to each true-hearted lass!

Chorus:

The Handsome Cabin Boy

'Tis of a pretty fair maid
As you may understand
She had a mind for roving
Unto a foreign land
Arrayed in sailor's clothing
She boldly did appear
And she engaged with our captain
To serve him for a year.

2. The captain's lady being on board,
She seemed it to enjoy
So glad the captain had engaged
A handsome cabin boy.
Many's the time they'd cuddle and kiss
And she would have liked to toy,
But 'twas the Captain found the secret
Of the handsome cabin boy.

3. Her cheeks appeared like roses,
Her side-locks in a curl,
The sailors oft-times smiled and said,
He looks just like a girl
But eating the captain's biscuits
Her complexion did destroy
And the waist did swell on pretty Nell,
The handsome cabin boy.

4. As through the Bay of Biscay
Our gallant ship did plough
One night among the sailors
There arose an awful row
They tumbled from their hammocks,
For their rest it did destroy
And they cursed about the groaning of
The handsome cabin boy.

Fore Bitters, No Work Required

5. Oh doctor, dearest doctor,
The cabin boy did cry
Me time is come, I am undone,
Surely I must die!
The doctor ran with all his might
And smiling at the fun
For to think a cabin boy should have
A daughter or a son.

6. When the sailors heard the news,
They all began to stare.
“That child belongs to none of us”
They solemnly did swear.
Said his lady to the captain,
“My dear I give you joy,
For ‘tis either you or I betrayed
The handsome cabin boy”.

7. So they all took up a bumper
And drank success to trade
And likewise to the cabin boy,
Though neither man nor maid
And if the wars should rise again
Us sailors to destroy
We'll ship some more of them sailors like
The handsome cabin boy.

Maggie May

Gather ‘round you sailor lads, come listen to me tale,
When you’ve heard it through you’ll pity me,
For I was a bloody fool in the port of Liverpool,
The first time that I came home from sea.

I was payed off at the Home, from a trip to Sydney Cove,
Two-pounds-ten a month was all me pay,
As I started drinking gin, I was neatly taken in,
By a woman of the name of Maggie May.

Fore Bitters, No Work Required

Chorus:

*Oh Maggie, Maggie May
They have taken her away
To slave upon Van Dieman's cruel shore.
Oh, you robbed so many whalers,
And dosed so many sailors,
But you'll never cruise down
Lime Street any more.*

2. In the Port of Liverpool, by the docks and near the school,
Lived a woman who could take your cares away.
She was big and she was raw, she had sex appeal and more,
And she answered to the name of Maggie May.

I wasn't standing very steady, but was rough and I was ready
To spend me money for her charmin' magic.
I was rather full of gin when the lady let me in,
But me story, sad to say, turned out quite tragic.
Chorus:

3. 'Twas a damned unlucky day when I first met Maggie May,
She was cruising up and down old Canning Place,
She had a figure fine, like a warship of the line,
And me bein' a sailor, I gave chase.

The next morning I awoke, stiff and sore and stoney broke,
No trousers kit, nor waist-coat could I find,
The landlady said, "Sir, I can tell you where they are,
They'd be down in Stolly's 'awkshop number nine."
Chorus:

4. To the Bobbie on his beat at the corner of the street,
To him I went, to him I told me tale.
He looked as if in doubt, said "Does your mother know you're out?"
But agreed the lady ought to be in jail.

To the pawnshop I applied, but no trousers there I spied,
The law had took that wicked girl away.
The jury guilty found her, of robbing a homeward-bounder,
And they paid her passage out to Botany Bay.
Chorus:

Ten Thousand Miles Away

Could Meg and Maggie May be the same girl?

Sometimes used as a capstan shanty

It's I've arrived at a gallant ship,
An' a fair an' fav'rin' breeze,
Wi' a goodly crew an' a cap'n too
To carry me over the seas;
To carry me over the seas, brave boys,
To me true love far away,
For I'm takin' a trip on a Government ship
Ten thousand miles away.

Chorus:

*Then blow, ye winds and blow!
A-rovin' I will go.
I'll stay no more on England's shore
To hear the music play
For I'm off in the mornin' rain, an' I won't come back again,
I'm takin' a trip on a Government ship
Ten thousand miles away.*

2. My true love wuz beautiful,
An' my true love wuz gay,
But she's taken a trip on a Government ship
Bound out to Botany Bay,
Bound out to Botany Bay, brave boys,
An' though she's far away,
I'll never forget me own true love,
Ten thousand miles away!

Chorus:

3. Oh, it wuz a summer's mornin',
When last I saw my Meg
She'd a Government band around each hand
An' another one round her leg
Oh, another one round her leg, brave boys
As the big ship left the bay,
"Adieu," sez she, "remember me,
Ten thousand miles away!"

Chorus:

Fore Bitters, No Work Required

4. I wish I wuz a bosun bold
Or a even a bombardier (sailor widout fear)
I'd man a boat and away I'd float
An' straight for me true love steer;
An' straight for me true love steer, brave boys
Where the whales an' dolphins play,
Where the whales an' sharks are havin' their larks
Ten thousand miles away.

Chorus:

5. Oh, the sun may shine through the London fog
Or the river run quite clear,
Or the ocean brine turn into wine
Or I forget my beer
Or I forget my beer, brave boys
Or the landlord's quarter-pay
But I'll never forget me own true love
Ten thousand miles away.

Chorus:

The Chivalrous Shark

The most chivalrous fish in the ocean,
To the ladies forbearing and mild,
Though his record be dark,
Is the man-eating shark
Who will eat neither woman nor child.

2. He dines upon seamen and skippers,
And tourists his hunger assuage
And a fresh cabin boy
Will inspire him with joy,
If he's past the maturity age.

3. A doctor, a lawyer, a preacher,
He'll gobble one any fine day.
But the ladies, God bless 'em,
He'll only address 'em
Politely and go on his way.

Fore Bitters, No Work Required

4. I can readily cite you an instance
Of a lovely young lady from Rheims;
Who was tender and sweet
And delicious to eat,
Who fell into the bay with a scream.

5. She struggled and flounced in the water
And signaled in vain for her barque.
And she'd surely been drowned
If she hadn't been found
By a chivalrous, man-eating shark.

6. He bowed in a manner most polished,
Thus soothing her impulses wild.
"Don't worry," he said,
"I've been properly bred,
And will eat neither woman nor child."

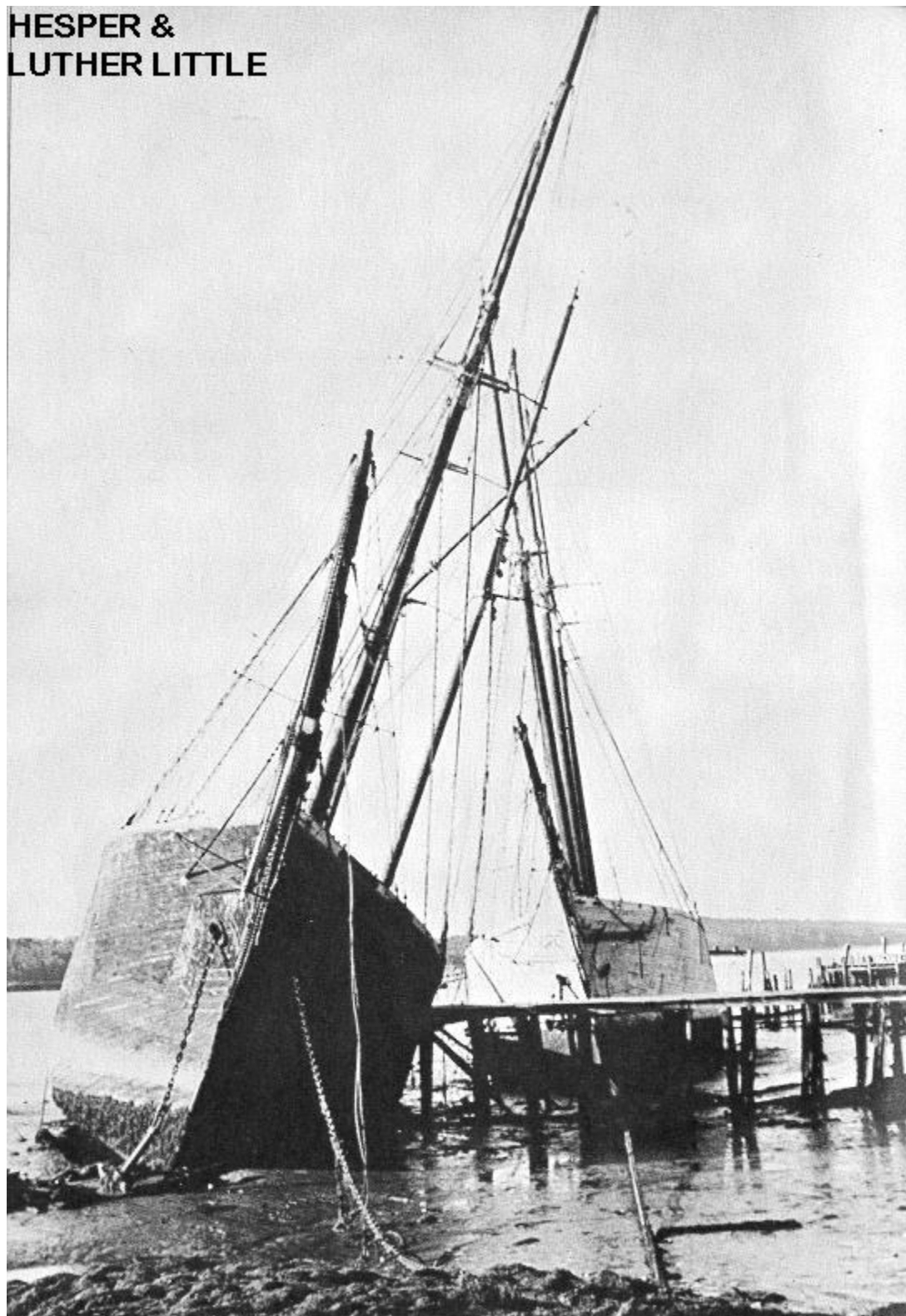
7. He proffered his fin and she took it,
Such gallantry none can dispute,
And the passengers cheered
As the vessel hove near,
And a broadside was fired in salute.

8. They schooled alongside of the vessel,
While a lifesaving dinghy was low'r'd.
With the pick of the crew
And her relatives few,
And the mate and the skipper aboard.

9. They hauled her aboard in an instant,
The shark stood attention the while.
Then he raised on his flipper,
And ate up the skipper,
And went on his way with a smile.

10. Now this proves that the prince of the ocean,
To the ladies forbearing and mild,
Though his record be dark,
Is the man-eating shark
Who will eat neither woman nor child.

The Hesper and The Luther Little, Abandoned in Wiscasset, ME, ca. 1938



Wiscasset Schooners

© 1985 Lois Lyman

Lois spent part of her childhood in Wiscasset, Maine, where she was used to play aboard the hulks of the two schooners there, the Hesper and the Luther Little. The vessels are disintegrating quickly now; she wrote this song to keep them and their history a bit closer to memory. She and her husband, Ross, sing it with me here.

Gordon Bok: Twelve string & vocals. Ross Faneuf & Lois Lyman, vocals, Doreen Conboy, fiddle.

Do you remember riding home before a dying summer breeze,
Your topsails gleaming golden, setting sun among the trees,
And the osprey wheeling slowly through the shadows by the shore,
Where the towering cliffs of granite plunge ten fathoms deep or more,
And the eddies swirl and flow down below.

You were solid-built of Douglas fir and oak and yellow pine,
Two hundred feet, sailed by a crew that numbered only nine,
Hauling lumber through your timberports, and dyewood from the south
Running home from Norfolk bringing coal to heat the north
And whatever they could stow down below.

*But the winter is upon you now, and time is passing slow
And the tides ebb and flow down below.*

You served them well for fifteen years, your canvass all unfurled
When New England sailing ships were found in ports around the world,
But spars gave way to smokestacks, clouds of white to black and grey,
There was nothing left for you to do but waste your time away.
And the rot was spreading slow, down below.

And the winter...

From Wiscasset to the China Lakes the Narrow Gauge did run,
To push it northward to Quebec was old Frank Winter's plan –
And schooners were to bring his cargoes in to meet the train,
When he found you idle by the dock, he brought you down to Maine
Where the tides ebb and flow down below.

You know he tried the best he could, by he just couldn't make it pay
So he ran you both aground, and turned around and walked away;
You've been waiting here for fifty years, but no one set you free,
Now you're broken down and dying, lying open to the sea,
And the tides ebb and flow down below.

And the winter...

The people come to stare at you with wonder in their eyes
For times have changed since men knew how to work a ship your size.
The seas you sailed are running black; in time we'll know our loss –
It's too late now for you, and is it too late now for us?
Can you teach what you know before you go?

*And the winter is upon you now, and time is passing slow
And the tides ebb and flow down below.*

Wiscasset Schooners is recorded on Gordon Bok's albums [Schooners](#) and [Harbors of Home](#)

The Edmund Fitzgerald

Melody© Gordon Lightfoot© Gordon Lightfoot

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down
Of the big lake they call Gitchigumi
The lake, it's said, never gives up her dead
When the skies of November turn gloomy.

With a load of iron ore 26,000 tons more
Than the Edmund Fitzgerald weighed empty
That good ship and crew was a bone to be chewed
When the gales of November came early

The ship was the pride of the American side
Coming back from some mill in Wisconsin
As the big freighters go it was bigger than most
With a crew and good Captain well seasoned.

Concluding some terms with a couple of steel firms
When they left fully loaded for Cleveland
And later that night when the ship's bell rang
Could it be the North Wind they'd been feeling.

The wind in the wires made a tattletale sound
When the wave broke over the railing
And every man knew, as the Captain did, too,
T'was the witch of November come stealing.

Old Ships and Shipwrecks

The dawn came late and the breakfast had to wait
When the gales of November came slashing
When afternoon came it was freezing rain
In the face of a hurricane West Wind

When supper time came the old cook came on deck
Saying fellows it's too rough to feed ya
At 7PM the main hatchway gave in
He said fellas it's been good to know ya.

The Captain wired in he had water coming in
And the good ship and crew was in peril
And later that night when his lights went out of sight
Came the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald.

Does anyone know where the love of God goes
When the waves turn the minutes to hours
The searchers all say they'd have made Whitefish Bay
If they'd fifteen more miles behind her.

They might have split up or they might have capsized
They may have drove deep and took water
And all that remains are the faces and the names
Of the wives and the sons and the daughters.

Lake Huron rolls, Superior sings
In the ruins of her ice water mansion
Old Michigan steams like a young man's dreams,
The islands and bays are for sportsmen.

And farther below Lake Ontario
Takes in what Lake Erie can send her
And the iron boats still go, as the mariners all know,
With the gales of November remembered.

In a musty old hall in Detroit they prayed
In the Maritime Sailors' Cathedral
The church bell chimed, it rang 29 times
For each man on the Edmund Fitzgerald.

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down
Of the big lake they call Gitchigumi
Superior, they say, never gives up her dead
When the gales of November come early.

White Squall

Stan Rogers

The town of Wiarton is situated at the mouth of one of the deepest Great Lake ports. For years, over 30% of the Captains and First Mates employed in shipping on the Lakes came from this quiet fishing town in the Bruce Peninsula. There are very few families in the town, even now, who have not lost a close relative to the fury of the lakes.]

Now it's just my luck to have the watch, with nothing left to do
But watch the deadly waters glide as we roll north to the 'Soo',
And wonder when they'll turn again and pitch us to the rail
And whirl off one more youngster in the gale.

The kid was so damned eager. It was all so big and new.
You never had to tell him twice, or find him work to do.
And evenings on the mess deck he was always first to sing,
And show us pictures of the girl he'd wed in spring.

CHORUS

But I told that kid a hundred times "Don't take the Lakes for granted.
They go from calm to a hundred knots so fast they seem enchanted."
But tonight some red-eyed Wiarton girl lies staring at the wall,
And her lover's gone into a white squall.

CHORUS

Now it's a thing that us oldtimers know. In a sultry summer calm
There comes a blow from nowhere, and it goes off like a bomb.
And a fifteen thousand tonner can be thrown upon her beam
While the gale takes all before it with a scream.

The kid was on the hatches, lying staring at the sky.
>From where I stood I swear I could see tears fall from his eyes.
So I hadn't the heart to tell him that he should be on a line,
Even on a night so warm and fine.

CHORUS

When it struck, he sat up with a start; I roared to him, "Get down!"
But for all that he could hear, I could as well not make a sound.
So, I clung there to the stanchions, and I felt my face go pale,
As he crawled hand over hand along the rail.
I could feel her heeling over with the fury of the blow.
I watched the rail go under then, so terrible and slow.
Then, like some great dog she shook herself and roared upright again.
Far overside. I heard him call my name.

CHORUS

So it's just my luck to have the watch, with nothing left to do
But watch the deadly waters glide as we roll north to the 'Soo',
And wonder when they'll turn again and pitch us to the rail
And whirl off one more youngster in the gale.

But I tell these kids a hundred times "Don't take the Lakes for granted.
They go from calm to a hundred knots so fast they seem enchanted."
But tonight some red-eyed Wiarton girl lies staring at the wall,
And her lover's gone into a white squall

The Mary Ellen Carter

She went down last October, in a pouring driving rain
The Skipper, he'd been drinking & the Mate, he felt no pain
Too close to three Mile Rock & she was dealt her mortal blow
And the Mary Ellen Carter settled low
There was just us five aboard her when she finally was awash
We'd worked like hell to save her, all heedless of the cost
And the groan she gave as she went down, it caused us to
proclaim

That the Mary Ellen Carter would rise again

G₇ - C D G / A_m - C D / G - C G
A_m - D - :// A_m D G -

Well, the owners wrote her off, not a nickel would they spend
"She gave 20 years of service, boys, then met her sorry end
But insurance paid the loss to us, so let her rest below"
Then they laughed at us & said we had to go
But we talked of her all winter, some days around the clock
For she's worth a quarter million, afloat & at the dock
And with every jar that hit the bar we swore we would remain
And make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again

Rise again, rise again

That her name not be lost to the knowledge of men
Those who loved her best & were with her to the end
Will make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again

A m D G - / C - G D / G - CD G / 1st

All spring, now we've been with her on the barge lent by a
friend

Three dives a day in a hard hat suit & twice I've had the bends
Thank God it's only 60 ft. & the currents here are slow
Or I'd never have the strength to go below
But we patched her rents, stopped her vents, dogged hatch
and porthole down

Put cables to her, 'fore & aft & girded her around
Tomorrow, noon, we hit the air & then take up the strain
And watch the Mary Ellen Carter rise again

For we couldn't leave her there, you see, to crumble into scale
She'd saved our lives so many times, living through the gale
And the laughing drunken mates who left her to a sorry grave
They won't be laughing in another day
And you, to whom adversity has dealt the final blow
With smiling bastards lying to you everywhere you go
Turn to & put out all your strength of arm & heart & brain
And, like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again

(last cho) Rise again, rise again

Tho' your heart it be broken & life about to end
No matter what you've lost, be it a home, a love, a friend
Like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again!

— Stan Rogers

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& on Schooner Fare "Alive". In SO! 29-3.