

Lyrics – Sailing Ships & Sailing Men

The Day of the Clipper *(Steve Romanoff/Outer Green Music)*

You can see the squares of canvas dancing over the horizon,
You can hear the chanty wailing to the heaving of the men;
You can feel the seas up to your knees and you know the sea is rising,
And you know the clipper's day has come again,

To the men on high, the bosun's cry commands a killing strain,
Till every mother's son begins to pray;
With a hearty shout, she comes about as she heads into the rain,
And the ship has never seen a better day.

Chorus:

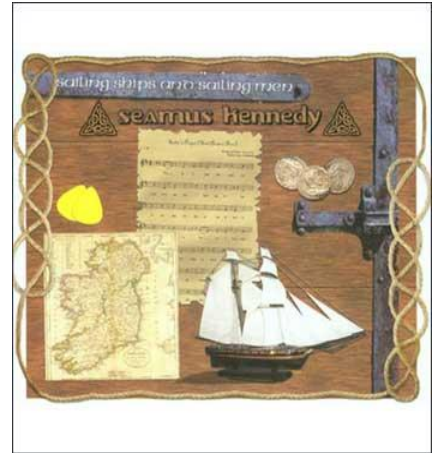
Sailing ships and sailing men will sail the open waters,
Where the only thing that matters is the wind inside the main.
Come all you loving mothers, keep your eyes upon your daughters,
For the sails will mend their tatters and the masts will rise again.

Wooden beams and human dreams are all that makes her go,
And the magic of the wind upon her sails.
She'd rather fight the weather than the fishes down below;
God help us if the rigging ever fails.

As the timber creaks, the captain speaks above the vessel's groan,
'Til every soul on board can hear the call;
It's nothing but the singing of the ship inside her bones,
And this is when she like it best of all. **(Chorus:)**

Where the current goes, the clipper's nose is plowing fields of green;
Where fortune takes the crews, we wish them well,
Where men could be when lost at sea is somewhere in between
The regions of a heaven and a hell.

Well, they're sailing eastern harbors and the California shores;
If you set your mind to see them there you can;
As you count each mast go sailing past you're prouder than before,
And you'll know the clipper's day has come again. **(Chorus:)**



Paddy Lay Back *(Trad.)*

'Twas a cold and frosty morning in December,
And all of me money it was spent;
Where it went to, the Lord, I can't remember,
So down to the shipping office I went.

Chorus: O Paddy lay back, take in your slack,
Take a turn around the capstan, heave a pawl;
About ship's stations boys, be handy,
For we're bound for Valparaiso round the Horn.

That day there was a great demand for sailors,
For the Colonies for 'Frisco and for France,
So I signed on board the Limey barque 'The Hotspur',
And got paralytic drunk on my advance. **(Chorus:)**

There were Dutchmen, there were Spaniards, there were Rooshians,
And Johnny Crapeaus just across from France,
Not a one of them could speak a word of English,
But they answered to the name of 'Month's Advance!' **(Chorus:)**

Now some of them fellers had been drinkin',
An' I meself was heavy on the booze.
I was sittin' on me ol' sea-chest a' thinkin'
I'd turn into me bunk an' have a snooze. **(Chorus:)**

When I woke up in the morning sick and sore,
I knew that I was outward bound again;
And I heard a voice a-bawlin' at the door,
'Lay aft, you buggers and answer to your names!'" **(Chorus:)**

Now I wish that I was in the 'Jolly Sailor',
Along with Irish Molly drinking beer,
And I'd think what jolly lads are sailors,
And with me flipper, I'd wipe away a tear. **(Chorus:)**

The Alabama *(Trad. Arr. & Adapted B. Hayford)*

When the Alabama's keel was laid,
Roll, Alabama, roll.
T'was laid in the yards of Jonathan Laird,
Roll, roll Alabama, roll.

It was laid in the yards of Jonathan Laird.
It was laid in the town of Birkenhead.

Down the Mersey Ways she sailéd then,
And Liverpool fitted her with guns and men.

From the Western Isles she sailéd forth,
To destroy the commerce of the North.

To Cherbourg Port she sail'd one day,
For to take her count of prize money.

Many a sailor laddie saw his doom.
When the Yankee Kearsarge hove in view.

'Til a ball from the forward pivot that day,
Shot the Alabama's stern away.

Off the three mile limit in sixty-four,
The Alabama was seen no more.

Little Jim

(Mike Campbell)

Little Jim he was a fisherman, and a good man through and through,
But every time Jim docked in port, he was known to drink a few;
On the twenty sixth day of March, back in nineteen sixty-four,
Little Jim tied up to the Kodiak pier, and headed for the bars on shore.
Little Jim tied up to the Kodiak pier, and headed for the bars on shore.

In the wee hours of the morning, as he weaved from side to side,
Jim staggered back to his ship so he could sleep through a few high tides.
With his belly full of whiskey in his cabin he lay down,
And slept like a babe in his mother's arms when the earthquake hit that town;
Jim slept like a babe in his mother's arms when the earthquake hit that town.

Oh the damage was enormous, nine-two on the Richter Scale,
And the people cried as the buildings shook, and the sea began to boil.

All the sirens they were screaming, as the tidal wave came near;
When the water rushed out of the harbor, every face was filled with fear.
But Jim still kept on sleeping while his lines all broke away,
And his ship settled down in the Kodiak mud on the bottom of Chiniak Bay.
Jim's ship settled down in the Kodiak mud on the bottom of Chiniak Bay.

Then the tidal wave came crashing in with a great unearthly roar;
Scooped up Jim's ship like it was a toy, and carried it over the shore;
It skittered right down the street, crashing into cars and walls,
But Jim was used to Alaskan storms and slept right through it all.
Little Jim was used to Alaskan storms and slept right through it all.

Many ships were torn apart that day, many lives were lost,
But Little Jim's ship was gently placed in the middle of a parking lot.

Now several hours later, when his bladder did prevail,
Little Jim woke up to Nature's call, and he stumbled to the rail;
He stared at all the damage, and his blood ran cold with fear;
"Oh Christ," said Jim, "How could I have been so drunk to have driven her here?"
"Oh Christ," said Jim, "How could I have been so drunk to have driven her,
Drunk to have driven her, drunk to have driven her here?"

The Boys of Killybegs *(Tommy Makem)*

There are wild and rocky hills on the coast of Donegal,
And the fishermen are hardy, brave and free,
And the big Atlantic swell is a thing they know right well,
As they fight to take a living from the sea.

Chorus: With a pleasant, rolling sea and the herring running free,
And the fleet all riding gently through the foam,
When the boats are loaded down there'll be singing in the town,
When the boys of Killybegs come rolling home.

Well you've donned your rubber boots and you've got your oilskins on,
And you check your gear to see that it's okay,
And your jumper keeps you warm for it's cold before the dawn,
And you're ready to begin another day. **(Chorus:)**

Now you're headed out to sea and the wind is running free,
And you cast your nets as rain begins to fall,
But the sun comes riding high and the clouds will soon go by,
And today you'll maybe take a bumper haul. **(Chorus:)**

When the weather's blowing rough and the work gets very tough,
And the ropes will raise the welts upon your hands,
But you'll never leave the sea for whoever you may be,
When it's in your blood it's hard to live on land. **(Chorus:)**

Well there's purple on the hills and there's green down by the shore,
And the sun has spilled his gold upon the sea,
And there's silver down below where the herring fishes go,
When we catch them there'll be gold for you and me. **(Chorus:)**

The Calabar *(Trad.)*

Come all ye dry-land sail-y-ors and listen to my song,
It's only three hundred and forty-two and a half verses
So I won't detain yez long.
Concernin' the advent-y-ures of this ould Lisburn* tar
Who sailed three years before the mast on board of the Calabar.

Now the Calabar was a mighty ship, well-fastened fore and aft,
Her helm stuck out behind her, and her wheel was a big long shaft,
With half a gale to fill her sail, she could make one knot per hour,
She's the fastest ship on the Lagan canal, and only one horse-power.

Now the captain he was a strapping lad, he stood about four foot two,
His hair was brown, his eyes was green, and his nose was a Prussian blue,
He wore a leather medal that he'd won in the Crimea war,
And the captain's wife was passengers' cook on board of the Calabar.

Now the captain he says to me, "Young man, young man," to me says he.
"Would you like to be a sail-y-or and roam the raging sea?
Would you like to be a sail-y-or the stormy seas to roll
For we're under orders for Portadown** with half a ton of coal."

Well, we left the Abercorn Basin, the weather it being sublime,
As we passed under the new, controversial Queen Elizabeth the Second Bridge,* We could hear the "Albert"*
chime.
And coming down the Gasworks Strait, a very dangerous part,
We ran aground on a lump of coal that wasn't marked down on the chart.

Then all became confusion and the stormy winds did blow,
The bo'sun slipped on an orange peel and fell into the hold below,
"Put on more steam," our captain cried, "for we are sorely pressed,"
And the engineer replied from the bank, "The ould horse is doing its best."

Then we all fell into the water and we all let out a roar
There was a wee man goin' 'til his work in the BBC Broadcasting House halfway up the Ormeau Road, and
he heard us all roarin' in the water, so he run down the Embankment, threw us the end of his galluses* in and
he pulled us to the shore,
No more I'll be a sail-y-or and roam the raging main,
Next time I go to Portadown, I'll take the bloody train.

*Lisburn – a town 8 miles from Belfast; * Portadown – another town miles away from Belfast; * the new,
controversial Queen Elizabeth the Second Bridge - originally, 'the old Queen's Bridge'; * the "Albert" – a
clock tower in Belfast; * galluses – suspenders.

South Australia *(Trad. Except for the last verse)*

In South Australia I was born!
Heave away! Haul away!
In South Australia round Cape Horn!
We're bound for South Australia!

Chorus: Haul away, you rolling king,
Heave away! To me haul away!
Haul away! you'll hear me sing
We're bound for South Australia!

As I walked out one morning fair,
'Twas there I met Miss Nancy Blair. **(Chorus:)**

I shook her up, I shook her down,
I shook her round and round the town. **(Chorus:)**

There ain't but one thing grieves my mind,
To leave Miss Nancy Blair behind. **(Chorus:)**

And now you're wallopin' round Cape Horn,
You'll wish to God you'd never been born! **(Chorus:)**

It's back again to Liverpool,
I spent me pay like a bloody fool! **(Chorus:)**

I'm Liverpool born and Liverpool bred,
Strong in the arm and thick in the head. **(Chorus:)**

In South Australia Skylab fell,
Fifteen billion shot to hell. **(Chorus:)**

The Fireship *(Trad.)*

As I stepped out one evening upon a night's career,
I spied a lofty clipper ship and after her I steered.
I hoisted up my sig-in-als which she so quickly knew,
And when she saw my bunting rise, she immediately hove to.

Chorus: Oh, she'd a dark and a rovin' eye,
And her hair hung down in ring-a-lets.
She was a nice girl, a decent girl,
But one of the rakish kind.

“Oh, please kind sir, excuse me for being out so late,
But if my parents knew of it, oh, sad would be my fate.
My father he's in politics, a good and honest man.
My mother is an acrobat so I do the best I can.” **(Chorus:)**

I eyed that girl both up and down for I'd heard such talk before,
And when she moored herself to me, she knew I'd come ashore,
So I deemed her fitting company for a sailor lad like me,
I kissed her once, I kissed her twice; she said, “Be nice to me.” **(Chorus:)**

I took her to a tav-er-in and I treated her to wine.
And little did I think that she was one of the rakish kind.
I handled her, I dandled her, and much to my surprise,
Turns out she was a fireship rigged up in a disguise. **(Chorus:)**

Then in the morning she was gone, my watch and money too.
My clothes she'd hocked, my shoes and socks, my seabag bid adieu.
But she'd left behind a souvenir, I'll have you all to know.
For in nine days, to my surprise, there was fire down below. **(Chorus:)**

Now all you jolly sailormen who sail upon the sea
From England to Amerikay take warning now from me.
Beware of lofty fireships, they'll be the ruin of you.
She not only made me walk the plank, she burned me mainmast, too. **(Chorus:)**

Báidín Fheidhlimidh (Trad.) (*Bawjean Ellimee - Phelimy's Little Boat*)
with phonetic pronunciation
("cb" is pronounced like the guttural "cb" in "Loch Ness").

Báidín Fheidhlimidh d'imigh go Gabhla,
Bawjean Ellimee dimmy guh Gola,
Phelimy's little boat has gone to Gola,
Baidín Fheidhlimidh's Feidhlimidh ann.
Bawjean Ellimees Fellimee unn
Phelimy's little boat with Phelimy in it.
Báidín Fheidhlimidh d'imigh go Gola,
Bawjean Ellimee dimmy guh Gola,
Phelimy's little boat has gone to Gola,
Báidín Fheidhlimidh's Feidhlimidh ann.
Bawjean Ellimees Fellimee unn.
Phelimy's little boat with Phelimy in it.

Chorus: Báidín bídeach, Báidín beosach,
Bawjeen beedach, Bawjeen byosach,
Tiny little boat, lively little boat,

Báidín bóidheach, Báidín Fheidhlimidh,
Bawjeen boyach, Bawjean Ellimee,
Pretty littleboat, Phelimy's little boat,

Báidín díreach, Báidín deontach,
Bawjean deerach, Bawjean jonetach,
Direct little boat, willing little boat,
Báidín Fheidhlimidh's Feidhlimidh ann.
Phelimy's little boat with Phelimy in it.

Báidín Fheidhlimidh d'imigh go Toraigh,
Bawjean Ellimee dimmy guh Tory,
Phelimy's little boat has gone to Tory,
Báidín Fheidhlimidh's Feidhlimidh ann. (2X) **(Chorus:)**
Phelimy's little boat with Phelimy in it.

Báidín Fheidhlimidh briseadh i dToraigh,
Bawjean Ellimee brishoo ih Dory,
Phelimy's little boat has broken in Tory,
Báidín Fheidhlimidh's Feidhlimidh ann. (2X) **(Chorus:)**
Phelimy's little boat with Phelimy in it.

Roll the Old Chariot Along *(Trad.)*

Oh, a fine pint o' beer wouldn't do us any harm (3x)
And we'll all hang on behind.

Chorus: We'll roll the old chariot along,
We'll roll the old chariot along,
We'll roll the old chariot along,
An' we'll all hang on behind!

Oh, a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm (3x)
And we'll all hang on behind. (**Chorus:**)

If the devil's in the way, we'll roll right over him etc. (**Chorus:**)

Oh, a plate of Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm etc. (**Chorus:**)

Oh, a night with the girls wouldn't do us any harm etc. (**Chorus:**)

Oh, the wind in the sails wouldn't do us any harm etc. (**Chorus:**)

Oh, a long spell in jail wouldn't do us any harm etc. (**Chorus:**)

Oh, a warm watch below wouldn't do us any harm etc. (**Chorus:**)

Oh, a pint o' Guinness stout wouldn't do us any harm (Cho)

Sailor's Alphabet *(Trad.)*

A's for the anchor that lies at our bow,
B's for the bowsprit, and the jibs all lie low;
C's for the capstan we all run around,
D's for the davits to lower the boat down.

E's for the ensign that at our mast flew,
F's for the fo'cstle where lives our wild crew.
G's for the galley where the salt pork smells strong,
H is the halyards we hoist with a song.

Chorus: Merrily, merrily, so merry sail we,
No mortal on earth like a sailor at sea;
Heave away, haul away, the ship rolls along;
Give a sailor his grog and hope nothing goes wrong.

I's for the eyebolts, no good for the feet,
J's for the jibs that stand by the lee sheet;
K's for the knighthead where the petty officer stands,
L's for the leeseide, hard found by new hands.

M's for the mainmast, it's stout and it's strong,
N's for the needle that never points wrong.
O's for the oars of our old jolly boats,
And P's for the pinnace that lively does float. **(Chorus:)**

Q's for the quarterdeck where our officers stand,
And R's for the rudder that keeps the ship in command;
S is for the stuns'ls that drive her along,
T's for the topsail, to get there takes long.

U's for the uniform, mostly worn aft;
V's for the vangs running from the main shaft;
W's for water, we're on a pint and a pound,
And X marks the spot where old Stormy was drowned. **(Chorus:)**

Y's for yardarm, needs a good sailor man,
Z is for Zoë, I'm her fancy man;
Z's also for zero in the cold winter time,
And now we have brought all the letters in rhyme. **(Chorus:)**

The Irish Rover *(Trad.)*

In the year of our Lord, eighteen hundred and six,
We set sail from the coal quay of Cork.
We were sailing away with a cargo of bricks
For the grand city hall of New York.

We'd an elegant craft, she was rigged fore-and-aft,
And oh, how the trade winds drove her.
She had twenty-three masts and she stood several blasts,
And they called her the Irish Rover.

There was Barney McGee from the banks of the Lee,
There was Hogan from County Tyrone.
There was Barney McGurk who was scared stiff of work,
And a chap from Westmeath called Malone.

There was Slugger O'Toole who was drunk as a rule,
And fighting Bill Casey from Dover.
And yer man Mick McCann from the banks of the Bann
Was the skipper of the Irish Rover.

We had one million bags of the best Sligo rags,
We had two million barrels of bone.
We had three million bales of old old nanny goats' tails,
We had four million pallets of stone.

We had five million hogs, six million dogs,
Seven million barrels of porter.
We had eight million sides of old blind horse's hides,
In the hold of the Irish Rover.

We had sailed seven years when the measles broke out
And the ship lost her way in a fog.
And the whale of the crew was reduced down to two,
'Twas myself and the captain's old dog.

Then the ship struck a rock, Lord, what a shock,
And nearly tumbled over,
Turned nine times around, and the doggie swam aground,
We're the last of the Irish Rover.

Fiddler's Green *(John Conolly © 1970)*

As I walked by the dockside one evening so fair,
To view the still waters and take the salt air,
I heard an old fisherman singing this song,
O take me away boys my time is not long.

Chorus: Wrap me up in me oilskins and jumper;
No more on the docks I'll be seen,
Just tell me old shipmates I'm taking a trip, mates,
And I'll see them someday in Fiddler's Green.

Now Fiddler's Green is a place I've heard tell
Where fishermen go if they don't go to Hell;
Where the weather is fair and the dolphins do play,
And the cold coast of Greenland is far, far away. **(Chorus:)**

Where the sky's always clear and there's never a gale,
And the fish jump on board with a swish of their tails;
You can lie at your leisure, there's no work to do,
For the skipper's below making tea for the crew. **(Chorus:)**

Now when you're in dock and the long trip is through,
There's pubs and there's clubs, and there's lassies there too.
Where the girls are all pretty and the beer is all free,
And there's bottles of rum growing on every tree. **(Chorus:)**

I don't want a harp nor a halo, not me;
Just give me a breeze and a good rolling sea,
I'll play me old squeeze box as we sail along,
With the wind in the rigging to sing me this song. **(Chorus:)**

Sally Brown *(Trad.)*

Oh Sally Brown, she took a notion,
Way, hey, roll and go.
She sent me sailing 'cross the ocean,
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

I shipped on board of a Liverpool liner,
Way, hey, roll and go.
And we rolled all night and we'll roll till the day,
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

Sally Brown has a fine full figure,
Way, hey, roll and go.
Her bow is big, but her stern is bigger,
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

Her mother doesn't like her tarry sailor,
Way, hey, roll and go.
She wants her to marry a New Bedford whaler,
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

So I signed onboard of a New Bedford whaler,
Way, hey, roll and go.
When I come home she had married a tailor,
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

Oh, Sally Brown I'll not deceive you,
Way, hey, roll and go.
I've signed on and I'm bound to leave you,
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

Oh, Sally Brown is a nice young lady,
Way, hey, roll and go.
Maybe someday she'll have my baby.
Gonna spend my money along with Sally Brown.

The Mingulay Boat Song *(Hugh S. Roberson)*

Chorus: Heel y' ho, boys; let her go, boys;
Bring her head round, into the weather,
Heel y' ho, boys, let her go, boys,
Sailing homeward to Mingulay.

What care we though, white the Minch is?
What care we for wind or weather?
Let her go boys; every inch is
Sailing homeward to Mingulay. (**Chorus:**)

Wives are waiting, by the pier head,
Or looking seaward, from the heather;
Pull her round, boys, then you'll anchor
'Ere the sun sets on Mingulay. (**Chorus:**)

Ships return now, heavy laden
Mothers holdin' bairns a-cryin'
They'll return, though, when the sun sets
They'll return to Mingulay. **(Chorus:)**

The Mary Ellen Carter *(Stan Rogers/Fogarty's Cove Music)*

She went down last October in a pouring, driving rain;
The skipper he'd been drinking and the mate he felt no pain;
Too close to Three Mile Rock and 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'd rise again.

Well the owners wrote her off, not a nickel would they spend;
She gave twenty 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 and said we had to go.
But we talked of her all winter, some days around the clock;
She's worth a quarter million a-floating at the dock,
And with every jar that hit the bar we swore we would remain
And make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again.

Chorus: Rise again, rise again!
Let her name not be lost to the knowledge of men;
All those who loved her best and were with her to the end
Will make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again!

All spring now we've been with her on a barge lent by a friend;
Three dives a day in a hard hat suit and twice I've had the bends;
Thank God it's only sixty feet and 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 and aft and girded her around.
Tomorrow noon we hit the air and then take on the strain,
And make the Mary Ellen Carter rise again. **(Chorus:)**

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 rats 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, and muster all your strength of arm and heart and brain,
And like the Mary Ellen Carter, rise again.

Rise again, rise again!
Though your heart it be broken and 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!

Rolling Home To Old New England *(Trad.)*

Call all hands to man the capstan,
See the cable running clear,
Heave away and with a will, boys,
For New England we will steer.

Chorus: Rolling home, rolling home
Rolling home across the sea
Rolling home to old New England
Rolling home dear land to thee.

Up aloft amid the rigging,
Blows a wild and favorin' gale;
Like a monsoon in the springtime,
Filling out each well known sail. **(Chorus:)**

Round Cape Horn one frosty morning,
And our sails were full of snow.
Clear your sheets and sway your halyards,
Swing her out and let her go. **(Chorus:)**

Fare you well, you Spanish maidens,
It is time to say adieu.
Happy times we've spent together,
Happy times we've spent with you. **(Chorus:)**

Many thousand miles behind us,
Many thousand miles before.
Ocean lifts her winds to bring us,
To that well remembered shore. **(Chorus:)**

And we'll sing a joyful **Chorus;**
In the watches of the night,
And we'll see her shores arisin',
In the early morning light. **(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 a-whaling.

Chorus: Oh Lord above, send down a dove,
With beak as sharp as razors.
To cut the throats of them there blokes,
What sells bad beer to sailors.

Paid off me score and then ashore, me money soon was flyin',
With Judy Lee, upon my knee, and in my ear a lyin'. (**Chorus:**)

With my newfound friends, my money spends just as fast as winkin',
But when I make to clean the slate, the landlord says, "Keep Drinking". (**Chorus:**)

With me money gone and clothes in pawn and Judy set for leavin',
Six months pay's gone in three days, but Judy isn't grievin'. (**Chorus:**)

When the crimp comes round, I'll take his pound, and his hand I'll be shakin',
Tomorrow morn sail for the Horn just as dawn is breakin'. (**Chorus:**)

So for one last trip, from port I'll ship, but next time back I'm swearin',
I'll settle down in my hometown, no more I'll go seafarin'. (**Chorus:**)