

Good Ship Calabar

Traditional

Whistle



Come - all ye dry-land - say - lie - ors and - lis - ten to me song It's -



on - ly for - ty - ver - ses - and I won't de - tain you long. It's - all a - bout the - his - tor - y of



this here Brit - tish tar, Who - sailed as a man be - e - fore the mast on - board - board the Cal - a -



barr.

Our vessel ploughed the waters of the Strabane Canal,
Being under close-reefed topsails, for the glass foretold a squall,
It was nor'east of the shipyard we were beating in the surf.
On our way to the Carrigans Harbour with a cargo of good black turf.

The Calabar was a clipper flat, copper-fastened fore and aft,
Her rudder stuck out far behind, her wheel was a great big shaft,
With half a gale to swell each sail, she'd make two knots an hour,
Being the smartest craft on the whole canal, though only one horse-power.

Our captain was a strapping youth, his height was four feet two,
His eyes were black, his nose was red, his cheeks a Prussian blue,
He wore a leather medal that he'd won at the China war,
And his wife was pilot and passenger cook aboard of the Calabar.

We started with a fav'ring gale, the weather being sublime
But just right under Derry Bridge, where you can't pass two at a time,
We were struck amidships by a scow that gave us a serious check,
For it stove in the larboard paddle box and shattered the hurricane deck.

Next day we ran short of buttermilk---it was all the captain's fault---
So the crew were laid up with scurvy, for the herrings were terrible salt.
Our coloured cook said the meat was done, there wasn't a bap on the shelf;
"Then we'll eat the soap," the captain cried, "let no man wash himself."

While hugging the shore near Sandy Brown's, a very dangerous part,
We ran bow on to a bank of mud that wasn't marked down on the chart,
Then to keep the vessel from sinking and save each precious life,
We heaved the cargo overboard, including the captain's wife.

Then all became confusion while the stormy wind did blow,
Our bo'sun slipped on an orange peel and fell in the hold below,
"A pirate ship," our captain cried, "and on us she does gain;
When next I go to Strabane, my boys, by Jove I'll go by train."

We got our arms all ready to meet the coming foe,
Our grappling irons, boarding pikes and Armstrong guns also
"Turn on full speed," the captain said, "for we are sorely pressed,"
But the engineer replied from the bank, "The horse is doing his best."

Oh, thick and fast the heroes fell, in streams the blood was spilt,
Great numbers fell before they were touched, to make sure they wouldn't be kilt,
At last when the enemy struck her flag, her crew being laid on their backs,
We found she was another scow with a cargo of cobbler's wax.