

FOLK SONGS OF MAINE

# Folk Songs of Maine

*sung by*  
**SANDY IVES**  
*accompanying himself*  
*on guitar*

*edited by*  
**KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN**

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sung by SANDY IVES

## AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

by  
SANDY IVES

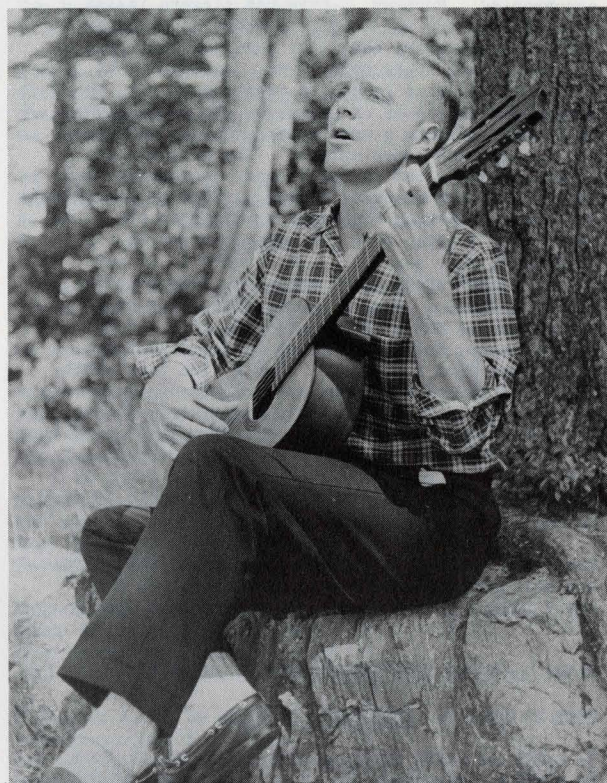
I have taken the liberty of limiting the word Northeast to Maine, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, because these are the areas with which I am well-acquainted (although I feel that Nova Scotia and Newfoundland should be included too). It can easily be extended to include New Hampshire, Vermont, parts of Quebec, and even southern New England. But the Maine-Maritimes area is its center.

Let us take Maine as typical of the whole Northeast. Basically Maine was (and still is, largely) the woods and the seacoast-- the big spruce and pine coming right down to the rocky, many-harbored coast. As the settlers came-- the English, Scotch, Irish, and, of course, the French-- they began fishing and cutting timber (especially mast timber at first). Slowly the land was cleared back and men started farming; even today, Maine is a state of many small farms, and there are few urban areas of any size. But always there have been the woods and the sea, and they have given Maine its unique character.

A young man of the last century who wanted to get away from the farm could go in two directions: to the woods or the sea. If he went to sea, he might ship on board one of the Maine clippers like the RED JACKET out of Rockland, or, at a slightly later date, on one of the "down-easters." Or he might become a fisherman, sailing to the Bay Chaleur, the Labrador coast, or one of the "banks," like the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, Georges Bank, or the Sable Island Bank. If, on the other hand, our young man decided to go into the woods, he would hire on in the fall and spend the whole winter "whaling down the pine," hauling it out and landing it on the ice of a lake or the bank of a stream. Then in the spring he might hire as a driver. Here his job would be to break up the landings and take the drive down through the rivers lakes to the sawmills. In former years there were big long-log drives on most of the Maine rivers: the Androscoggin, the Kennebec, the Penobscot (the greatest of all), the Union, the Machias, the St. Croix. Today, all the drives are of four-foot pulwood; only on the Machias can one still see sawlogs driven, and even this drive is a shadow of what was.

Anyone who collects songs in Maine and the Maritimes is struck by the homogeneity of the material. With the exception of the many local songs, a song that is known in Maine will also be known in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island and, what is more, often to the same tune. Horace Beck pointed this out in an article in *Midwest Folklore* ("Folksong Affiliations of Maine," VI: 159-166), and he also pointed out that the general drift of these songs is from the Maritimes to Maine. This he explains, quite correctly, by the fact that people from the Maritimes tended to settle in Maine more than people from Maine tended to settle in the Maritimes. New Brunswickers and "P.I.'s" came to Maine to work in the woods and in the mills; further there was a constant exchange among fishermen, as Maine vessels often put in to Maritime ports.

With the exception of the shanties, which were work songs, these songs were sung for fun. Often at a party, everyone present would be required to perform in some manner: sing a song, step-dance, play a fiddle-tune, recite, or tell a story. Certain songs also often became associated with certain people,



Edward "Sandy" Ives

EDWARD ("SANDY") IVES was born in White Plains, New York, in 1925. He attended Cambridge School, Kendal Green, Massachusetts, graduating from there in 1943. During World War II, he spent 3 years in the Marine Corps, and after the war was over he studied at Hamilton College, graduating from there with a B.A. degree in 1949. Taking graduate studies at Columbia University, he received his M.A. in English Literature in 1950. He has since taught in English departments of Illinois College, and The City College of New York, and is presently an instructor of English at the University of Maine in Orono, Maine.

Mr. Ives activities in folklore have been largely concerned with the Northeast. He has spent considerable time traveling around Maine, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, collecting songs and tales, and doing research on Larry Gorman, one of the greatest of the lumbering woods poets and songwriters. He has been given three grants by the Coe Research Fund at the University of Maine to continue his work on Gorman, and is presently completing a biography of Gorman's life.

Mr. Ives is co-organizer of The Northeast Folklore Society, and co-editor of its quarterly publication, *NORTHEAST FOLKLORE*. In addition, he has written various articles for scholarly folklore publications including *The Journal of American Folklore* and *Midwest Folklore*. For his many contributions to the study of folklore, he was appointed as a Councillor of the American Folklore Society in 1957.



and one will hear of a song, "That's Bill's song." On board ship, the men would sing when they were off duty in the fore-castle; hence the name "fore-castle song" for any song sung on shipboard that was not a shanty. In the woods, the men would sing after supper. Often there would be one or two men in camp who were known as singers and they would likely do most of the entertaining in this line. But anyone who could sing was welcome to try. One man in particular I recall hearing described as one who "couldn't sing worth a damn, but he knew a lot of songs and was always willing."

A few notes on the manner of singing. With one exception, all the songs I have found were sung unaccompanied. Further, I have had singers insist that this is the way they were meant to be sung, and old singers are sometimes made uncomfortable by hearing the songs sung to any accompaniment. The rhythm is what is called *rubato parlando*, the singer moving faster or slower as the words seem to demand, holding a note unexpectedly, "hitching," and using grace notes aplenty. The delivery is generally described as "flat" and "undramatic" and these words are adequate as far as they go in indicating that no obvious dramatics or dynamics are used. Yet I often wish for some other words, because to hear some of these singers is to gain a new concept of dynamics and a new understanding of the dramatic. A good singer (not every singer by any means) has a feeling for the rise and fall of his story, and he builds up to the climax and moves away from it in a way that I find very exciting, even though I can neither explain nor duplicate it. The spoken ending, i.e. the speaking of the last word, phrase, or even line, seems to be peculiar to the Northeast, and even here it is moribund. I seldom hear it here in Maine, but I have found it among older singers in New Brunswick, and it is even common on Prince Edward Island.

The songs and ballads I have selected to sing here are all songs that were sung here in Maine, are about Maine, or can qualify on both counts.

Notes by SANDY IVES and KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN

#### SIDE I, Band 1: LOVEWELL'S FIGHT

In April of 1725, Captain John Lovewell left from Dunstable, Massachusetts, with some forty-odd men on an Indian raid. Near the present-day village of Fryeburg, Maine, stood the Indian village of Pigwacket. On the shore of that pond, Lovewell and his men saw a lone Indian, and, since Indian scalps were worth something, they decided to go after him. Lovewell's blunder in having his men leave their packs by the pond before going after the Indian is only too obvious from the song; a party of Indians discovered them and set an ambush -- and into this ambush the returning soldiers walked. The fight went on all day. Along about nightfall the Indians withdrew, but later returned again. After the Indians left for a second time, the English waited until midnight, and then started back to Dunstable. It was a victory of sorts, albeit a Phrrhic one.

Mrs. Fannie H. Eckstorm believed the ballad was written to cover up a scandal. She points out that the date has been deliberately changed from Sunday, May 9th, to Saturday, May 8th. She says: "A rumor, which Seth Wyman, arriving late on Saturday, May 15, would have had to confirm, was spreading like wildfire that there was a scandal connected with the fight... Something had happened, which even if true, must be hushed up; something which even in our time would raise a tempest of talk. The minds of the people must be diverted from the victims of the Fight and the one responsible for their death, else the effects of a notable victory would be dissipated in family rows and recriminations." Parson Symmes, she feels, is the prime mover here.

Who wrote the ballad? Mrs. Eckstorm presents an interesting case showing that Benjamin Franklin's uncle, whose name was also Benjamin, was very likely the author.

The text and tune for this ballad, as well as Mrs. Eckstorm's comments, were taken from an article in *BULLETIN OF THE FOLK-SONG SOCIETY OF THE NORTHWEST*, Number 4, 1932, pp. 6-8. The text has been shortened by the singer, who also notes that: "...after a couple of years of singing this song, my tune varies slightly from the one printed in the *BULLETIN*."

#### LOVEWELL'S FIGHT

Of worthy Captain Lovewell I purpose now to sing,  
How valiantly he fought for his country and his king;  
He and his valiant soldiers did range the woods full  
wide,  
And hardships they endured to quell the Indians'  
pride.

'Twas nigh unto Pigwacket upon the eighth of May,  
They spied a rebel Indian soon after break of day;  
He on a bank was standing, upon a neck of land,  
That leads into a pond as we're made to understand.

Then up spoke Captain Lovewell, "Take you good heed,"  
said he.

"This rogue is to decoy us I very plainly see.  
Let us march in order, each man leave his pack,  
That we might better fight them when they make  
their attack."

Then having scalped this Indian, they went back to  
the spot  
Where they had left their packs, but there they found  
them not;  
For the Indians having spied them when they them  
down did lay,  
Did take them for their plunder and carry them away.

The Indians lay in ambush in a spot nearby,  
And one of the British soldiers did one of them  
espy,  
And cried out, "There's an Indian!" At that they  
started out;  
As hideously as lions they fearfully did shout.

Then up spoke Captain Lovewell, when first the fight  
began,

"Fight on, my gallant heroes, you see them fall like  
rain."

As we are informed, the Indians were so thick  
A man could scarcely fire a shot and not some of them  
hit.

'Twas ten o'clock in the morning when first the fight  
began,  
And fiercely did continue until the set of sun;  
And then those rebel Indians, about the hour of  
night,  
Did draw off in the bushes and cease then for to  
fight.

But still our valiant English 'til midnight did  
remain  
To see whether those Indians would have a fight again;  
But they no more returning, they started for their  
home,  
And carried off their wounded as far as they could  
come.

Now worthy Captain Lovewell among them there did die;  
They killed Lieutenant Robbins and wounded young  
good Frye.  
He was our English chaplain, he many Indians slew,  
And some of them he scalped while bullets round him  
flew.

Young Fullam too I'll mention because he fought so  
well;  
Endeavoring to save a man a sacrifice he fell.  
And yet our valiant English in fight were ne'er  
dismayed,  
But bravely kept their order and Wyman captain made.

Who killed the old chief Paugus and did the foe defeat,  
Then put his men in order and brought off the retreat;  
Then braving many dangers and hardships by the way,  
They all arrived at Dunstable the thirteenth day of May.



SIDE I, Band 2: AROOSTOOK WAR SONG

The Aroostook War of 1839, resulting from a boundary dispute between Maine and New Brunswick, appears to have inspired the creation of at least three songs, though it is unknown at this late date whether any of them ever had any currency in tradition.

The war seems to have been set off by the seizure of a Maine land agent by some armed New Brunswickers on the night of February 12, 1839. The Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick issued a proclamation stating that the province had been invaded, and called for a draft of soldiers. The Maine governor regarded this as a declaration of war, and, under orders from him, a large number of Maine men had taken up arms. The war, however, appears to have been a bloodless one. Within five days of the original incident, two New Brunswick officials were captured and brought to Bangor. By April, negotiations resulted in the withdrawal of Maine troops, and the question was finally settled by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842.

This song was learned from Roland P. Gray's SONGS AND BALLADS OF THE MAINE LUMBERJACKS, 1924, pp. 156-157. Gray reports that these verses were found among the papers of a Colonel Charles Jarvis, of Ellsworth, Maine, who had been appointed by the Maine governor to take over the position of the kidnapped Maine land agent in 1839. It is believed that one of the Maine soldiers wrote these lines while sitting at a campfire shortly after the kidnapping incident. No tune was given for this song, and the singer has supplied his own.

AROOSTOOK WAR SONG

Ye soldiers of Maine,  
Your bright weapons prepare:  
On your frontier's arising  
The clouds of grim war.

Your country's invaded,  
Invaded the soil  
That your fathers have purchased  
With life blood and toil.

Then "Hail the British!"  
Does anyone cry?  
"Move not the old landmarks,"  
The settlers reply.

"Move not the old landmarks,"  
The scriptures enjoin,  
For our sons of Columbia  
Are west of the line.

SIDE I, Band 3: THE MIRAMICHI FIRE

The Miramichi River, second longest river in New Brunswick (and one of the greatest salmon rivers in the world), is the largest river to lie entirely within the boundaries of that province. It has two main branches: the 'Sou'west', which begins well above Boiestown, is the largest, and has a tradition of lumbering second only to that of Maine's Penobscot; the 'Nor'west' rises in upper Northumberland County and flows generally south and east, joining the 'Sou'west' just above the great lumbering and shipbuilding port of Newcastle. A few miles below Newcastle, on the south side of the river, is Chatham, another great lumber and shipping port. Below this the river broadens out into Miramichi Bay.

The story told in the ballad of "The Miramichi Fire" is extremely accurate. The fall of 1825 is reported to have been a very dry one, and there were many serious fires in both New Brunswick and Maine.

The ballad was found printed (perhaps as a broadside) on an old sheet of paper, in a trunk in a house in Olamon, in the 1930s, reportedly written by one Thomas M. Jordan shortly after fire. The song was well known all over the Northeast, and many singers from whom Sandy Ives has collected could remember fragmentary verses of the song. Ives finally collected a rather complete version from "Long Joe" Doucette from the little Acadian fishing village of Mininigash (Ebbfleet),

Prince Edward Island. In his guitar accompaniment, Ives has tried to reproduce 'Long Joe's' beating time heavily with his foot, and sings 10 of the 14 stanzas learned from Long Joe (the printed version referred to above contained 21 stanzas).

THE MIRAMICHI FIRE

This is the truth that I now tell you  
Part of which my eyes did see;  
What did happen to the people  
On the banks of the Miramichi.

Seventh evening of October,  
Eighteen hundred twenty-five,  
Two hundred people died by fire,  
It scorched those that did survive.

Some said it was because the people's  
Sins did raise like mountains high,  
They did ascend up to Jehovah;  
He would not see and justify.

In order to destroy their lumber  
And the country to distress,  
He sent a fire in a whirlwind  
From the howling wilderness.

'Twas on the Nor'west first discovered,  
Twenty-two men there did die;  
Then it passed across the meadows,  
To Newcastle it did fly.

While the people were all sleeping  
Fire seized upon the town;  
Fine and handsome were the buildings,  
They soon tumbled to the ground.

Burnt three ships that they were building  
And two more at anchor lay;  
Many that did see that fire  
Thought it was the Judgement Day.

Then it passed on to Black River  
Where it did kill sixty more;  
Then it made its way with fury  
'Till it reached the briny shore.

Forty-two miles by one hundred  
This great fire did extend;  
All was done within eight hours,  
Not exceeding over ten.

Killed the wild beasts of the forest  
And in the rivers all the fish;  
Such another awful fire  
To see again I do not wish.

SIDE I, Band 4: SANTY ANNA

This capstan shanty (sung while heaving at the capstan bar, in raising the anchor) was one of the most popular sung by both American and British seamen. Unlike most shanties, which are almost impossible to date with any accuracy, Santy Anna, by nature of its historical references, can pretty safely be dated to shortly after our war with Mexico (1846-1848).

Why Santa Anna should emerge as a hero and Zachary Taylor a coward in an American shanty presents a fascinating problem to students of folk history. Santa Anna's stirring defense of Buena Vista, and the general failure of Taylor's campaign in Northern Mexico at the beginning of the war apparently made a deep impression, for, though Santa Anna's forces were decisively defeated at a later date, the folk chose to immortalize him for his temporary victory during the early stages of the war.

The version given here is essentially as cited in Joanna C. Colcord's SONGS OF AMERICAN SAILORMEN, 1938, pp. 84-85, as having been the final shanty sung on board the last whaling ship to return to New Bedford.



## SANTY ANNA

O Santy Anna gained the day,  
Away, Santy Anna,  
And General Taylor ran away,  
All on the plains of Mexico.

Oh, Santy Anna fought for fame,  
And that's how Santy won his name.

Oh, Santy Anna fought for gold,  
The deeds he done have oft been told.

Oh, Santy Anna's day is o'er;  
Now Santy he will fight no more.

I thought I heard the old man say,  
Away, Santy Anna,  
He'd give us grog this very day,  
All on the plains of Mexico.

## SIDE I, Band 5: THE CUMBERLAND'S CREW

This Civil War ballad commemorates the valiant fight of the Union ship Cumberland with the Confederate iron-clad Merrimac off Newport News, Virginia, on March 8th, 1862. The Cumberland, a wooden-hulled ship, sank rapidly after being rammed by the iron prow of the Merrimac. Many sick and wounded men were drowned in the sinking, and the crew of the Cumberland is said to have fought to the very end.

Numerous poems were written describing the battle, including those of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and George H. Boker. But none of these highly literary descriptions became as popular in the public mind as did two broadside ballads published shortly after the incident. The best known of these was "The Cumberland's Crew", which became a favorite with sailors and lumbermen.

Sandy Ives learned this version from William Bell of Brewer, who reports having learned it on Prince Edward Island over fifty years ago.

## THE CUMBERLAND'S CREW

Oh shipmates come rally and join in my ditty  
Of a terrible battle that happened of late;  
Let each good Union tar shed a tear of sad pity  
As he lists to the once gallant CUMBERLAND's fate.  
On the eighth day of March told this terrible story,  
And many a tar to this world bade adieu;  
But our flag it was wrapped in a mantle of glory  
By the heroic deeds of the CUMBERLAND crew.

On that ill-fated day about ten in the morning,  
The sky it was clear and bright shone the sun;  
The drums of the CUMBERLAND sounded a warning,  
Bidding each gallant seaman to stand by his gun.  
An ironclad frigate down on us came bearing,  
While high in the air her rebel flag flew;  
A pennon of treason she proudly was waving,  
Determined to conquer the CUMBERLAND crew.

Then our noble ship fired her guns' dreadful  
thunder,  
Her broadsides like hail on the rebels did pour;  
The sailors gazed on filled with terror and wonder  
As their shot struck her side and glanced harmlessly  
o'er.

But the pride of our Navy could never be daunted,  
Though the dead and the dying our decks they did  
strew;  
The flag of our Union how proudly she flaunted,  
Sustained by the blood of the CUMBERLAND crew.

Three hours we fought them with stern resolution,  
'Til those rebels found cannon could never decide;  
The flag of succession had no power to gall them,  
Though the blood from her scuppers did crimson the  
tide.

Then she struck us amidships, our planks she did  
sever,  
Her sharp iron prong pierced our noble ship through;  
But still as they sank 'neath the dark rolling  
waters,

"We'll die at our guns!" cried the CUMBERLAND crew.

Then slowly she sank 'neath Virginia's dark waters,  
Their voices on earth will ne'er be heard more;  
They'll be wept by Columbia's brave sons and fair  
daughters,  
May their blood be avenged on Virginia's shore.  
In their battle-stained graves they are silently  
lying,  
Their souls have forever to each bade adieu;  
But the star-spangled banner above them was flying,  
It was nailed to the mast by the CUMBERLAND crew.

## SIDE I, Band 6: THE STATELY SOUTHERNER

Several broadsides and orally circulated ballads concerning the feats of John Paul Jones, America's leading Naval hero of the Revolutionary War, sprang up on both sides of the Atlantic in the days when Jones harassed British warships in their own home-waters. One of the best of these songs describes an incident in which the Ranger, a fast privateer built on Badger's Island, Maine, and commanded by John Paul Jones, made a foray into British waters where it suddenly encountered a British warship of vastly superior size and guns; the ballad proceeds to describe the escape of the faster and more maneuverable Ranger.

When a Yankee built ship should have been referred to as "the Stately Southerner" has puzzled numerous collectors who have come across the song. William Doerflinger, in his SHANTYMEN AND SHANTYBOYS, 1951, pp. 131-133, gives the explanation that the term was first applied not to the ship but to Jones, who had settled in Virginia after having been born in Scotland.

The version given here was learned from Eckstorm & Smyth's MINSTRELSY OF MAINE, 1927, pp. 209 ff. as taken down from the singing of Captain Archie S. Spurling, of Isleford, Maine, in 1925. Mr. Ives has omitted various stanzas (without effecting the ballad story), and has substituted the last two lines for those found in Spurling's version.

## THE STATELY SOUTHERNER

'Tis of a stately southerner that carried the stripes  
and stars,  
A whistling wind from west-nor'west blew through  
her pitch-pine spars;  
Her starboard tack we had on board were heavy on the  
gale,  
One autumn night we raised the light on the Old Head  
of Kinsale.

What rises on our weather bow? What hangs upon the  
breeze?  
'Tis time our good ship hauled her wind abreast of  
the Saltees;  
And by her wondrous spread of sail, her sharp and  
tapering spars,  
We knew our morning visitor was a British man-of-war.

"Out booms upon the Southerner, out booms and give  
her sheet!  
The fastest keel that cuts the deep and the pride of  
the British fleet  
Come bearing down upon us with a high foam at her  
prow.  
Out booms upon the Southerner, spread out your canvas  
now!"

Away, away! A shower of shot came through our rigging  
and mast,  
The fastest keel that cuts the deep was heading our  
frigate fast;  
Those British tars they gave three cheers from the  
decks of their corvette  
We answered back with a scornful laugh from the deck  
of our patriot bark.

Up spoke our noble captain, a cloud was on his brow;  
He said, "My gallant heroes, our great distress is  
now.  
We carry aloft the stars and stripes against that  
British host;  
Paul Jones, the terror of the seas, shall flog them  
on their coast."



The morning mist had just arisen that scarce obscured the shore,  
A heavy fog hung o'er the land from Erin to Kingshore;  
Paul Jones down in North Channel did steer, his sharp  
prow cut the spray.  
We left that British ship astern soon after the break  
of day.

#### SIDE II, Band 1: THE SHANTY BOYS

This is one of the most widespread of all lumbering songs. Versions have been collected from Pennsylvania, Montana, Michigan, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Newfoundland, and very frequently from Maine. Many of the deep woods lumbering camp songs were patterned on this model, describing conditions and the daily routine in terms familiar to all woodsmen. Such songs may have been suggested by similar pieces of occupational lore sung by British peasantry; certainly, at least one stanza of the song given here can be traced back to a 19th century carter's song from England, Jim, the Carter's Lad (see stanza three of The Shanty Boys).

The version sung here was learned from an old Penobscot woodsmen, Charles Sibley of Argyle, Maine. Sandy Ives has collected the song frequently in the Northeast, almost always sung to this same tune.

#### THE SHANTY BOYS

Come all ye good jolly fellows, come listen to my song,  
It's all about the shantyboys and how they get along;  
We're all good jolly fellows as you will ever find,  
To wear away the winter months a whaling down the pine.

The chopper and the sawyer, they lay the timber low,  
The swamper and the teamster, they haul it to and fro;  
You'd ought to hear our foreman soon after the break of day,  
"Load up your team two thousand feet-- to the river you'll steer away."

Crack! Snap! goes my whip, I whistle and I sing,  
I sit upon my timber load as happy as a king;  
My horses they are ready and I am never sad,  
There's no-one now so happy as the jolly shanty lad.

Noon will soon be over, to us the foreman will say  
"Put down your saws and ax my boys, for here's your pork and beans."  
Arriving at the shanty, 'tis then the fun begins,  
A'dippelin' in the water pail and dinglin' of the tin.

And then to us the cook will say, "Come fella, come fly, come Joe;  
Come pass around the water pail as far as the water goes."  
As soon as lunch is over, to us the foreman will say,  
"Put on your coat and cap, my boys, to the woods we'll bear away."

We all go out with a cheerful heart and a well-contented mind,  
The days don't seem so long among the wavy pine;  
You ought to hear our foreman, soon after the sun goes down,  
"Put down your saws and ax, my boys, to the shanty we are bound."

Arriving at the shanty with wet and damp cold feet,  
We all pull off our larrigans, our suppers for to eat;  
We all play cards till nine o'clock, then into our bunks we climb--  
To wear away the winter months a-whaling down the pine.

#### SIDE II, Band 2: A TRIP TO THE GRAND BANKS

Fishing schooners from New England frequently made (and still make) summer-long trips to the Grand Banks of Newfoundland to pull in rich harvests of cod, halibut and other food fish. The Yankee fishermen who made these trips joined in a spirit of comradery and mutual interest rarely found aboard merchant ships. Life on board ship during a trip to the Grand Banks is graphically described in this fine ballad which Phillips Barry first printed in the BULLETIN OF THE FOLK-SONG SOCIETY OF THE NORTHEAST, Number 4, 1932, p. 16.

The ballad was written by Amos Hanson of Orlando, Maine. Hanson, a fisherman all of his life, was born in Penobscot and disappeared at sea in the 1890s. He had a reputation for making up songs and verses around town, and was known as a great character. "Penobscot boys", referred to in the first stanza, may be men from Penobscot town (on the Bagaduce River), or men from the Orland-Bucksport area. "Hagduls and careys" are skua gulls and stormy petrels, respectively, and "snapeyes" are small codfish, so-called because they bite at fish-eyes used for bait.

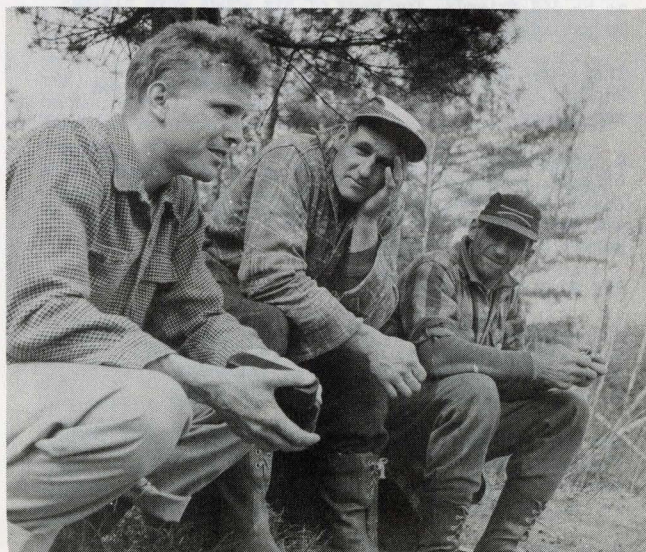
#### A TRIP TO THE GRAND BANKS

Early in the spring when the snow is all gone,  
The Penobscot boys are anxious their money for to earn;  
They'll fit out a fisherman a hundred tons or nigh,  
For the Grand Banks of Newfoundland their luck for to try.

Sailing down the river, the weather being fine,  
Our families and friends we leave far behind;  
We pass the Sable Island as we have done before,  
Where the waves dash tremendous on a storm-beaten shore.

We make for the shoals and we make for the rocks,  
The hagduls and careys surround us in flocks;  
We drop our best anchor where the waves run so high,  
On the Grand Banks of Newfoundland for snapeyes to try.

Early in the morning before the break of day,  
We jump into our dories and saw, saw away;  
The snapeyes steal our bait and we cuss and we rave,  
And we swear if we get home again we'll give up the trade.



Sandy Ives and some Riverdrivers  
on the Machias River.





A Maine woods crew sixty years ago.

It's thus we pass the summer through dread and  
through fear,  
Through fog-mulls and gales of wind and big ships  
passing near;  
They sometimes run our schooners down and sink them  
in the deep--  
The thought of such scenery is horrid to repeat.

Our salt is all wet but one half a pen,  
Our colors we will show and the mainsail we will bend;  
Wash her down, scrub the decks and the dories we will  
stow,  
Then it's haul up the anchor, to the westward we go.

#### SIDE II, Band 3: THE BOYS OF THE ISLAND

Boys from the Island (Prince Edward Island) sometimes travelled into Maine looking for lumbering work, and, as frequently as not would be recognized for the greenhorns that they were by the clean, well-made homespun clothing that they wore. This song, describing the trials and tribulations of "the boys from the Island", was composed by Larry Gorman, himself an Island boy, and one of the best song-writers in the Northeast.

Gorman was born in Trout River (now Tyne Valley), Prince Edward Island, in 1846 and died in Brewer, Maine, in 1917. He had worked in the woods and on the drives in Miramichi, in Maine (especially on the Union River), and for a short while in New Hampshire. Everywhere he went he made up songs and poems about the people he worked for and with. People still remember him and his songs today. And he seems to have made as many enemies with his songs as he did friends, for many of his songs were biting-ly satirical.

This version was collected from Arthur Dalton in Rumford, Maine. Dalton, too, had been "a boy from the Island".

A 'kennebecker' (stanza 3) was a carpet bag. Timothy O'Leary, mentioned in stanza 7, was a well known Bangor policeman, an ex-river-driver himself, who had the best down in the old 'Deveil's Half Acre', Hay-market Square in Bangor.

#### THE BOYS OF THE ISLAND

You sporting young fellows from Prince Edward Island,  
Come listen to me and I'll tell you the truth;  
From a lumberman's life it is my intention  
To advise all young men and sensible youth.

Now the boys on the Island on the farms are not happy,  
They say, "Let us go, we are doing no good."  
Their minds are uneasy, continually crazy  
For to get o'er to Bangor and work in the woods.

So a new suit of clothes is prepared for the journey,  
A new pair of shoes made by Sherlock and Clark,  
A fine kennebecker well stuffed with good homespun,  
And then this young Island boy he does embark.

When he reaches Bangor, gets off at the station,  
Old bushmen look on him all with a keen eye;  
Take a look at the clothes that young fellow is  
wearing

And that will soon tell you he comes from P.I.

Now a lumberman's life is of short duration,  
Made up of tobacco, bad whiskey and rum;  
And according to scripture there's still the hereafter,  
So the worst of our days, boys, is yet for to come.

Then up in the woods, happy and contented,  
With God, man and Devil is to them the same;  
Such up-river tearing, cursing and blaspheming,  
For kicking and biting is their down-river game.

In Bangor they'll poison the youth with bad whiskey,  
To the devil they'll banish all brandy and ale;  
And when on the corner they find the youth tipsy,  
They'll send for Tim Leary and march 'em to jail.

Now if this be the law, by the mother of Moses,  
They have got better laws among heathen Chinee,  
Where a man can get drunk and come in and get sober  
And then sleep it off in the shade of a tree.

#### SIDE II, Band 4: SALLY BROWN

This is another capstan shanty known widely in the Northeast. Who the heroine of this sometimes bawdy song was has never been determined, but that she was a woman of many vices and easy virtues seems to have been well established in the numberless versions of the song dating back to at least the first half of the 19th century. Most frequently she is described as a mulatto, though occasionally she is referred to as a blue eyed and curly haired maiden, or even as a 'nice old lady'.

After the days of sail disappeared, the shanties began to pass slowly out of tradition, until, at the present time, it is only rarely that one can find a person who remembers more than a few lines of any one of them. It should be remembered that shanties were worksongs, and as such were undoubtedly sung a great deal slower than anyone sings them today.

#### SALLY BROWN

Sally Brown was a Creole lady,  
Way, hay, roll and go!  
Dark enough but not too shady,  
Spent my money on Sally Brown!

Seven years I courted Sally,  
Seven years she would not marry.

I bought her gowns, I bought her laces,  
I took her out to all the places.

Sally swore she would never leave me,  
And that she would not deceive me.

Now I'll court me a bright mulatter,  
Way, hay, roll and go!  
What drinks rum and chews tobacco,  
Spent my money on Sally Brown!

#### SIDE II, Band 5: THE OLD BEGGAR MAN (Child #17)

The Northeast has been one of the finest collecting grounds for the classic British ballads canonized by Francis James Child in his monumental compilation, "The English and Scottish Popular Ballads", 1882-1898 (reprinted in 1956). One of the rarest of these ballads to be found in America is that of "Hind Horn" (Child #17). The ballad is based on various medieval metrical romances, concerning the adventures of a legendary King Horn, which date from the 13th century, and involving only one of the many incidents related in the romances. Hind Horn serves the king for seven years and falls in love with his daughter. The king is angry and



sends Hind Horn to sea. The daughter has given young Horn a ring; as long as the stones keep their color she is true to him, but if they change hue she has succumbed to another man. After seven years at sea, Hind Horn looks at the ring and finds it has turned pale. He makes for his own country and meets a beggar who gives him the news that his love has married (or is to be married). Horn changes clothing and gear with the beggar and goes to the palace. The bride comes down to drink with the disguised Horn, and he drops her ring into the glass. She questions him as to where he got the ring and Horn reveals his identity. The king's daughter is ready to give up her position to join him, but Hind Horn tells her he can maintain her as a lady.

Mr. Ives has found many informants who recognize the story, including some that have been able to start little sketches of it, but he has never yet collected a good version of the ballad. The one given here is from Barry, Eckstorm and Smyth's BRITISH BALLADS FROM MAINE, 1929, pp. 73 ff., as taken down from the singing of Thomas E. Nelson of Union Mills, New Brunswick in 1928.

#### THE OLD BEGGAR MAN

"Whence came ye, and from what countree?  
Whence came ye, and where were you born?"  
"In Ireland I was bred and born  
Til I became a hele and his horn."

He gave his love a gay gold watch  
That she might rule in her own countree;  
She gave him a gay gold ring,  
And the virtue of that ring was above all thing.

"If this ring bees bright and true,  
Know that your love is true to you;  
But if this ring bees pale and wan,  
Your true love is in love with another man."

He set sail and off went he,  
Until that he came to a strange countree;  
He looked at the ring, it was pale and wan,  
His true love was in love with another man.

He set sail and back came he,  
'Til that he came to his own countree,  
And as he was riding along the plain,  
Who should he meet but an old beggar man.

"What news, what news, you old beggar man?  
What news, what news have you got for me?"  
"No news, no news," said the old beggar man,  
"But tomorrow is your true love's wedding day."

"You lend me your begging rig,  
That begging rig it must go on;  
So come tell me as fast as you can,  
What's to be done with the begging rig."

"You may beg from Pitt, you may beg from Paul,  
Beg from the highest to the lowest of them all;  
But from them all you need take none  
Until you come to the bride's own hand."

She came trembling down the stairs,  
Rings on her fingers and gold in her hair,  
A glass of wine all in her hand,  
Which she did give to the old beggar man.

He took the glass and drank the wine,  
And in the glass he slipped the ring.  
"O where got you this, by sea or by land,  
Or did you get it off a drowned one's hand?"

"Neither got I it by sea or by land,  
Neither did I get it off a drowned one's hand;  
I got it in my courting gay,  
And I gave it to my love on her wedding day."

Rings from her fingers she did pull off,  
Gold from her hair she did let fall,  
Saying, "I'll go with you forevermore  
And beg my bread from door to door."

Between the kitchen and the hall  
The diner's coat he did let fall,  
All a-shining in gold amongst them all,  
And he was the fairest in the hall.

#### SIDE II, Band 6: TITTERY NAN

This delightful little ballad seems to be completely localized to the Northeast. It is said to be popular and widely known in Maine, and most collected versions have come from that state. It may well be a product of this century, no versions of it having been reported before 1920. The version given here is a combined text made up of stanzas appearing in Linscott's FOLK SONGS OF OLD NEW ENGLAND, 1939, pp. 292-293, and BULLETIN OF THE FOLK-SONG SOCIETY OF THE NORTHEAST, Number 6, 1933, p. 13.

#### TITTERY NAN

On Saturday night the wind blew west  
Tittery Nan an Tario  
There was a husking in the east  
Toory dan, toory nell  
Tittery Nan an tario.

Old Joe Dingle he was there,  
He stole Josiah's old gray mare.

Old Josiah after him took,  
He caught him down by Sawmill Brook.

Old Josiah to him said,  
"How came you for to steal my jade?"

"Oh runty toodle, it wasn't I."  
"You damned old rascal, now you lie!"

Old Josiah knocked him down,  
He banged his nose agin the ground.

The saddle and bridle are on the shelf,  
If you want any more, go sing it yourself.

#### SIDE II, Band 7: PETER AMBERLY

On Prince Edward Island, about two miles from Elmsdale on the way to Campbellton, on what is called the Dock Road is the old 'Amberly Place', now fallen to ruin but still standing. It was from this house, and from his father, that young Peter Amberley ran away in the fall of 1880, went up the Miminigash, caught a ride in a schooner going up the Miramichi, and hired to work in the woods up around Boiestown. Just as the ballad relates, while he was loading yarded logs on to a two-sled (a long sled with runners at each end) so that they could be taken to the landings down on the river, the load slipped and crushed him. He died the next day and was buried in the small Catholic cemetery just outside of Boiestown. The grave can still be seen there, a neat mound with a neat border of blueberries around it, and a wooden cross at its head. On the cross is the simple inscription:

Peter Amberly  
Died 1881

John C. Calhoun, local 'poet and philosopher' of Boiestown, was present at the time of the accident and made up the song given here. He reportedly sent the text to another poet, Abraham Munn (pronounced Moon), to put a tune to it, Munn not only set it to music, but also added the last verse which has come down in tradition to this day. The tune to which Mr. Ives sings this song was learned from Mrs. Lidelie W. Robbins of Hudson, Maine. Alden Mace of Southwest Harbor also sang the song for him, and the last stanza given here is from his singing. Mr. Ives reports that with the possible exception of "The Jam on Gerry's Rock", this is the best known woods song of the Northeast.



PETER EMBERLY

My name is Peter Emberly as you may understand,  
I was born on Prince Edward's Island down by the  
ocean strand.  
In eighteen hundred and eighty when the leaves  
were a brilliant hue  
I left my native island, my fortune to pursue.

I landed in New Brunswick in the lumbering  
counteree  
I hired to work in the lumbering woods on the  
Sou'west Miramichi;  
I hired to work in the lumbering woods and bring  
the tall spruce down,  
And while loading two-sleds in a yard I got my  
fatal wound.

Adieu unto my father, 'twas he that drove me here;  
He used to treat me very mean, his punishment  
was severe.

Don't ever press a boy too hard to try to keep  
him down;

'Twill only cause him to leave home when he is far  
too young.

Adieu unto my best friend, I mean my mother dear;  
Adieu to Prince Edward's Island and the Island  
girls so dear.  
Oh little did my mother think as she sang lullaby,  
What countries I might travel to or what death I  
might die.

Now there is just one more thing that in this  
world I crave;  
It's that some holy father will come and bless  
my grave.  
Nearby the city of Boiestown my mouldering bones  
do lay,  
A-waiting for the saviour's call on that great  
judgement day.

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