

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FSS 37301

SALT ATLANTIC CHANTIES

Tom Sullivan

Recorded at Sea
Aboard the Brig 'Unicorn'



SALT ATLANTIC CHANTIES

Tom Sullivan

Choruses by 'Unicorn' crew and friends & Dreadnoughts
Instrumentals by Claude Morgan,
Sleeth Mitchel, Jerry Cunningham

RETURN TO ARCHIVE
CENTER FOR FOLK LIFE PROGRAMS
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Side A

1. Brian Boru's March (1:29)
Irish Traditional
2. Randy Dandy O (1:53)
Brake windlass chanty, traditional
3. Gals Around Cape Horn (4:02)
Forecastle song, traditional
4. Child Grove (2:39)
English country dance, traditional
- 5a. Handy, Me, Boys
Hand-over-hand chanty, traditional
- 5b. Striking the Royals
(5a & 5b 1:08)
- 6a. The Sailor Likes His Bottle-O
Two-pull halyard chanty, traditional
- 6b. Emma Let Me Be
One-pull halyard chanty, traditional
(6a & 6b 2:38)
7. The Quarrelsome Piper (1:49)
Irish traditional hornpipe
8. Blow, Boys, Blow (2:20)
Two-pull halyard chanty, traditional
9. The Butterfly (2:05)
Irish traditional slip jig
10. Strike the Bell (2:59)
Pumping chanty, traditional

Side B

1. Paddy Lay Back (3:04)
Brake windlass chanty, traditional
2. Ten Thousand Miles (3:45)
Forecastle song, traditional
- 3a. Haul 'er Away
Two-pull halyard chanty, traditional
- 3b. Billy Riley
One-pull halyard chanty, traditional
(3a & 3b 2:06)
4. Shepherd's Hey (3:00)
(Headington jig) Morris dance
traditional
5. Dellahantey's
Irish traditional hornpipe:
- 6a. Roll, Boys, Roll
Two-pull halyard chanty, traditional
- 6b. Shallow Brown
One-pull halyard chanty, traditional
(6a & 6b 2:48)
7. Morgan Magan (4:03)
Turloch O'Carolan
8. Coal Black Rose (1:05)
Two-pull halyard chanty, traditional
9. Leave Her Johnny (4:03)
Pumping chanty, traditional

This album is unique. The chanties — traditional shipboard worksongs of the deepwater sailor — were recorded at sea by experienced foremast hands aboard the historic square-rigger *Unicorn*, with the work actually in progress. The rhythm and cadence of the work, and the sounds of the pawls, blocks and seafoam which accompanied the songs are entirely authentic — the closest recorded replication to date of the original context in which the chanties were created and sung. The instrumental pieces and forecastle are rendered by accomplished musicians on traditional instruments — fiddle, banjo, Anglo and English concertina, and the five-string banjo-mandolin — with great attention to the unpolished beauty and energy of the songs and tunes themselves. It is rare enough to find traditional music unsullied by concessions to the demands of the popular market; but to find it, as here, so beautifully and naturally performed as not to require any 'adaptation' to the 20th century taste is a delightful experience.

Stuart M. Frank
Mystic Seaport Museum
Mystic, Connecticut

Tom Sullivan's music is a unique blend of his musical virtuosity, Irish heritage, sea experience and scholarly pursuit of maritime history. He is chantyman, ship musician and bosun of the port watch on the brig *Unicorn*, and before that lent his innumerable talents to the staff of Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut, where, surrounded by historic square-riggers, he immersed himself in the history and lore of Yankee seafaring.

In addition to his hearty tenor voice and fine work on fiddle, Anglo concertina and banjo — which may be sampled on this record — Tom interprets traditional music on guitar and Irish whistle, and may be heard on a solo recording entitled *On Deck and Below: The Irish at Sea*, (Folkways, FS3566).

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An illustrated booklet containing
history and verses of each chanty,
background on the musicians,
and the making of the recording,
plus a glossary of nautical terms
is included inside.

Salt Atlantic Chanties

Tom Sullivan

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Side A

1. "Brian Boru's March" (1:29) Irish traditional; T. Sullivan, Anglo-concertina.
2. "Randy Dandy-O" (1:53) Brake windlass chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & Chorus.

3. "Gals Around Cape Horn" (4:02) Forecastle song-traditional; T. Sullivan, vocal & five string banjo; C. Morgan, English concertina; S. Mitchell, banjo-mandolin.
4. "Childgrove" (2:39) English country dance-traditional; T. Sullivan, fiddle; C. Morgan, English-concertina; S. Mitchell, banjo-mandolin.
5. a. "Handy Me Boys" Hand over hand chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
b. "Striking the Royals" (1:08) Captain J.B. Smith, UNICORN crew & greenhands.
6. a. "The Sailor Likes His Bottle-O" 2 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
b. "Emma Let Me Be" 1 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
7. "The Quarrelsome Piper" (1:49) Irish traditional-hornpipe; T. Sullivan, fiddle; C. Morgan, English-concertina; J. Cunningham, bones & Bodhran.
8. "Blow Boys Blow" (2:20) 2 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
9. "The Butterfly" (2:05) Irish traditional slip jig; S. Mitchell, banjo, mandolin.
10. "Strike the Bell" (2:59) Pumping chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.

Side B

1. "Paddy Lay Back" (3:04) Brake windlass chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
2. "Ten Thousand Miles" (3:45) Forecastle song-traditional; T. Sullivan, vocal & five string banjo; C. Morgan, English-concertina.
3. a. "Haul Her Away" 2 pul halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
b. "Billy Riley" (2:06) 1 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
4. "Shephards' Hey" (3:00) (Headington jig) Morris dance traditional and "Dellahantey's" Irish traditional-hornpipe; T. Sullivan, fiddle; C. Morgan, English-concertina; S. Mitchell, banjo-mandolin.
5. a. "Roll Boys Roll" 2 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
b. "Shallow Brown" (2:48) 1 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
6. "Morgan Magan" (4:03) Turloch O'Carolan; T. Sullivan fiddle; C. Morgan, English-concertina; S. Mitchell, banjo, mandolin; J. Cunningham, Bodhran.
7. "Coal Black Rose" (1:05) 2 pull halyard chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.
8. "Leave Her Johnny" (4:03) Pumping chanty-traditional; T. Sullivan & chorus.

SALT ATLANTIC CHANTIES

*"The bow-wash is eddying, spreading from the bows,
Aloft and loose the topsails and someone give a hove;
A salt Atlantic chanty will be music to the dead,
A long pull, a strong pull, and yard to the masthead!"*

....John Masfield, "A Valediction"

"Salt Atlantic Chanties" is an anthology of traditional tunes, sea chanties, and forecable songs as recorded at sea aboard the Brig UNICORN. The UNICORN, formerly the Schooner LYRA, was built in 1948 in Sibbo, Finland. She carried sand, gravel, timber and other building materials in the Baltic and North Sea for 22 years. In 1971 she was rebuilt in Sweden, refitted as a brig and sailed to America to begin a career trading in the Caribbean. There she carried general cargo until 1973 when Hurricane Fifi devastated Honduras, destroying warehouses of goods awaiting shipment. The hurricane passed leaving UNICORN unharmed, but bankrupt. She was purchased by William Wycoff Smith of Philadelphia, who had her rebuilt and converted to a private yacht in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Mr. Smith wanted UNICORN to participate in Operation Sail '76, but died before realizing his dream. His widow, however, sponsored the ship in the tall ship events of the Bicentennial and in the race from Bermuda to Newport where UNICORN placed fifth overall. UNICORN has been used in the television film "Roots", the film version of the "Bermuda Triangle", and in the National Education Television film, "The Ghosts of Cape Horn". Today the vessel is engaged in sail training, providing an opportunity for the general public to participate in a unique sea experience.

UNICORN is constructed of wood and is sheathed below the waterline with copper. Her sails are flax. The 155 lines that comprise her running rigging are, with a few exceptions, manila, a natural fiber. Standing rigging is wire cable, parcelled, served and tarred in the traditional manner. She is 136 feet outside the rig and her mainmast stands 81 feet from truck to step. She carries 17 sails, not including studding sails, and has a total plain sail area in excess of 5,000 square feet.

For some 150 years the brig rig was used extensively. Because of their great maneuverability, brigs were common on coastal routes. A familiar brig is PILGRIM, comparable in size to UNICORN, in which Richard Henry Dana sailed west around Cape Horn as recounted in *Two Years Before the Mast*. Another brig is BEAGLE, on which Darwin began formulating his theory of evolution. The rig began to die out in the 1880's as steam became more prevalent in the coastal trades and the oceans were left to larger more efficient vessels. The last major use of the rig was to train naval cadets, with both the United States and Great Britain maintaining fleets in the 1900's. As far as is known, UNICORN is the last square-rigged vessel to have carried cargo in the Western hemisphere and is the only square-rigged wooden sailing vessel permitted to engage in coastwise commerce (sea education) in the United States.

When UNICORN sails, her permanent crew of 12 is divided into port and starboard watches. On a typical work day, crew members can be found on deck and aloft engaged in a variety of tasks. The bow watch sits at the forecable head, maintaining lookout. The helmsman stands abreast the wheel glancing aloft, intent on the course steered and the action of wind in the rig. Another sailor squats on the foredeck, his hammer-like beetle ringing out as he pounds oakum and cotton into the seams between the deck planks with a variety of caulking irons. Nearby someone bangs rust away with a chipping hammer, work clothes smeared with tar and stained with red lead. Aloft a man swings in a boatswain's chair working with needle and palm to place a patch over a worn area of sail. Close by someone passes a serving mallet around one of the stays to replace some of the service that keeps moisture out of the underlying steel cable. These sailors work at skills centuries old and now nearly lost. Their tools are relics of the past. Their lives

are dictated by the demands of the ship and the whims of the weather. When sails must be set or struck, when the anchor weighed, they provide the manpower to accomplish the task. In such a setting, a song to coordinate the pulls at the halyards or heaves at the windlass is as natural and functional today as it was 100 years ago.



THE MUSIC

The chanties in this album are performed by a number of men from a variety of backgrounds, most of whom have never performed in concert halls and probably never will. Approximately half of them are sailors by profession, members of the crew of the Brig UNICORN. The rest come from a variety of shore-side professions and have gathered to help make this album possible. All share a love for ships and sailing tradition and a respect for the sea.

To the uninitiated, the songs of "Salt Atlantic Chanties" may seem to be grunted in approximated rhythm to a series of indistinguishable squeaks, rattles and bangs. In reality these sounds are the music of a finely tuned instrument: a 250-ton brig under sail. The stays that support the mast "sing" as they are drawn taut in the force of the wind. The flaxen squaresails produce a tympany-like roll as they fill with air; a yard bangs against the mast as it rises to the masthead; at the windlass, anchor chain clangs noisily through the hawse pipe and pawls click into place. All this work is coordinated by the singers whose backs bend in a common effort to set sail, weigh anchor, and pump bilges. They are sailors at work as they sing and their songs are working songs--chanties.

Chanties have a call-response relationship between soloist and chorus. Structure varies in other ways, but this relationship remains constant. The soloist is the chantyman. His tone is that of a work foreman. His songs must elicit a coordinated and concerted effort from the crew. The chantyman's voice competes with the ambient noise of wind, water, and a working rig. It is a strident, overworked voice, full of the boatswain's hoarseness. His songs at times become almost shouts, his intonation approximate, with vowels sometimes taking on a peculiar form for the sake of volume and clarity. His lyrics

may be standard or improvised; the verses are disjointed, and only occasionally is there the thread of a story line. What harmony there may be in the chorus evolves from the natural range of the singers. It is rarely rehearsed.

David W. Bone, author of *Capstan Bars*, deploras the relegation of chanties to saloons and concert halls fearing that "in a few years their purpose may be forgotten and transferred to the motley book of popular songs (where) they will doubtless linger only as entertainment". I personally applaud those who sing chanties in any way, shape or form, and respect their efforts to preserve this segment of our maritime heritage. Still Mr. Bone's point is well taken. Chanties were never intended to be performed for an audience, and during the age of sail they rarely were. Superstition restricted them to shipboard use; West Indians, it seems, sometimes sang them when off watch, developing harmonies to the choruses, but this leisure time use was rare. They were work songs, providing a rhythm to coordinate the efforts of those hauling and heaving, as well as providing a diversion to ease the tedium of the task. Generally, chanties were heard only in conjunction with the tasks associated with operation of a seagoing vessel.

No rule restricted any chanty to one job, although structure was often a limiting factor. A chanty that developed at the halyards usually stayed there because it fit well. Halyard chanties generally had one or two choruses, with one or two pulls at the line per chorus. Chanties that developed at the capstan, windlass, or pumps often were longer and more complicated. The pumping beat at the brake windlass or pumps, the rolling beat of the downtown pumps, or the marching beat at the capstan allowed greater latitude. Because any of these tasks demanded more time than hoisting a yard, there was more story line filling the chanty's diversionary role. Stan Hugill, well-known maritime author and chantyman, cautions against being too dogmatic in assigning any one chanty to a particular task. A chantyman could move a halyard chanty to the windlass with impunity, and we find that this was often the case: a halyard chanty to one ship might be a hand over hand or windlass chanty to another. We used "Paddy Lay Back," a capstan chanty in most books, at the windlass because we liked the chanty and it fit. We also varied the rhythm at the brake windlass slightly, as generally the pumping action had two motions to the up position and two to the down position. The rhythm of the song allowed for a break in action so the men could change grip and exert greater force. The number of hands we worked with enabled us to eliminate this break and we worked the windlass in one motion fitting the music to this altered rhythm. Had we been weighing our heavier anchor, we would not have made this change. These changes were expedient, and any good chantyman would have made them.

Work and song at the pump is similar to work at the windlass. Here the labor is not so strenuous, so one motion from top to bottom suffices instead of the broken action common at the windlass. Lyrics to pumping chanties are often more vulgar than those of other chanties. Perhaps the vile and rotten vocabulary reflects an abhorance for this tedious task which continued endlessly on some vessels.

In recording "Salt Atlantic Chanties" we did not hesitate to use vulgarities in the interest of authenticity, though some restraint was exercised. Many of the best anthologies of sea songs and chanties available to us were published in the first part of this century. Printing the double entendres found in many songs of the sea, such as "Radcliff Highway", must have been daring for a reputable firm, so it is no wonder we find so many euphemisms and deletions. I used a few myself.

THE RECORDING

The use of chanties has been a regular part of the sea education program aboard UNICORN, and "Salt Atlantic Chanties" is in part a result of that program. The crew was accustomed to chanting up the anchor and sails and the students who sailed aboard joined in with relish. As a crew, we worked and sang well together and as time progressed our repertoire increased.

During the summer prior to recording, UNICORN made some friends who became assets to the album. The first was "Dreadnought", three men who were doing sea songs and chanties in the Boston area. They had worked together for more than two years and were anxious to sail UNICORN. We, in turn, welcomed their fine voices and, as always, the extra beef at the lines. Later we met Claude Morgan and Sleeth Mitchel, two extremely talented street musicians who were most often found in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The tape which formed the basis for the record was made during a September passage from Boston, Massachusetts to Mystic, Connecticut. We began by securing microphones to various places on deck and aloft to produce a sound that would place the listener on deck with us, as well as record the ambient sounds of the ship under sail and the work at hand. Three microphones were placed along the deck where the sailors line up to man the halyard and one was set at the downfalls with the chantyman. A microphone was placed next to the lead block where the downfalls reached the deck; another was lashed to the jibboom to capture the sound of the bow wave, and we lashed a shotgun mike to the foremast spreaders where the topmast and topgallant masts meet. We directed it at the sheave in the mast over which the tyechain passes from the yard below to the halyard gin block to give us the banging noise created by the yard moving up the mast.

Preparations were made to set sail. After a few quick trials, I took my position at the downfalls and gave a sing out. We made four consecutive pulls together. These dry pulls took the slack out of the tackle, and the sail began to billow. It was time to begin the chanty. I started with the chorus, letting the crew know what chanty would be sung. "Haul 'er away, oh, haul 'er away," the crew answered giving two pulls at the halyard. I started in again before they finished the refrain, "Oh hurrah, hurrah for you Sally Rackett, oh." Again they answered, "Haul 'er away, oh, haul 'er away," and gave two more pulls. This continued until we were well into the forty or so pulls necessary to hoist the yard. But as the sail filled with air each pull became more difficult. Without warning I changed to a chanty that would allow one pull per chorus and slow the pace. "Oh Billy Riley, Mr. Billy Riley," I sang. "Oh Billy Riley, oh," they answered, and gave a strong pull. Finally the yard was to the masthead, the leeches stretched taut and the sail full. "Avast hauling," boatswain's mate, Chris Mays called. Our work was done for the moment.

THE CHANTIES

In *Chanteying Aboard American Ships*, Frederick P. Harlow points out that "few people are alive today who have heard chanties aboard ship under true conditions." In "Salt Atlantic Chanties" we provide that opportunity. We call attention to the natural setting for these songs and invite you aboard to listen in as we weigh anchor, set sail, work the brake pumps and use chanties as they were used in the age of sail and as they are used today aboard UNICORN.



Side A

Brian Boru's March

This Celtic tune played on an Anglo-concertina reflects at once both the loneliness and simplicity of a seafaring life.

Randy Dandy O

1. Now we are ready to head for the Horn,

Chorus: Way, ay, roll an' go;

Our boots an' our clothes, boys, are all in the pawn,

Chorus: Tim-me rollickin' randy dandy-O!

Heave a pawl, oh, heave away,

Chorus: Way, ay, roll an' go;

The anchor's on board an' the cable's all stored,

Chorus: Tim-me rollickin' randy dandy O!

2. Soon we'll be warpin' her out through the locks,
Where the pretty young gals come down in flocks.

3. Come breast the bars and heave her away,
Soon we'll be rollin' her 'way down the Bay.

4. Sing goodbye to Sally an' goodbye to Sue,
For we are the boys who can kick her through!

5. Oh, man the stout windlass an' heave with a will,
Soon we'll be drivin' her way down the hill!

6. Heave away ye parish-rigged bums,
Take yer hands from yer pockets an' don't suck yer thumbs!

7. We're outward bound for Vallipo Bay,
Get crackin', m'lads, 'tis a hell of a way!

This capstan and pumps song opens by describing the plight of many outward bounders:

"Now we are ready to head for the Horn,
Way, ay, roll an' go!
Our boots and clothes are all in pawn,
Timme rollickin' randy dandy O!"

Many prostitutes in sailortowns around the world would take a man's money and then rob him of his possessions, even his clothes. The sailor often found himself hung over and nauseated at the capstan or windlass of an outward bound ship with a crew of similarly victimized men. Being left with inadequate clothing for an arduous passage around the Horn was the final insult. He would now have to go to the captain's slop chest for clothing, which would place him deep in debt.

Colcord's version of this song is a homeward bound chanty:

"Now we're warping her into the docks
Way-aye, roll and go!
Where the pretty young girls come down in flocks,
My galloping randy dandy O!"

The outward bound version we sing was heard on the old Cape Horners and comes to us through Stan Hugill. In both the homeward bound and the outward bound versions, some of the verses, and an original bawdy refrain, have been camouflaged. The line "Take yer hands from yer pockets and don't suck yer thumbs" reminds me of the couplet so often heard when the watch is called: "Take your hands off your...and get into your socks!"

Gals Around Cape Horn

1. Oh 'tis of the pocket Amphitrite, in Boston she did lay,
Awaitin' there for orders, boys, to take us far away,
Awaitin' there for orders, boys, for to take us far from home,
An' our orders came for Rio, boys, an' then around Cape Horn.
2. Oh, we beat our way across the Bay, with a fair wind to the Line,
The royals all set and the stays all taut, the Trades they blew so fine;
Our Johns they all were fighting fit, good seamen all were we,
For to hand and reef and steer, me boys, we all worked bravely.
3. Well when we arrived in Rio, boys, we anchored for a while,
We set up all our riggin', and we bent all our new sail;
From ship to ship they cheered us, as we did pass along,
And they wished us pleasant weather in a-roundin' o' the Horn.
4. Oh when beatin' off Magellan Straits, the wind blew strong an' hard,
While short'nin' sail two gallant tars fell from the topsail yard;
By angry seas the lines we threw from their weak hands was torn,
We had to leave 'em to the sharks that prowl around Cape Horn.
5. When we got around the Horn, me lads, fine nights and pleasant days,
And the very next place we anchored in was Valparaiso Bay;
Where all them pretty gals come down, I solemnly do swear,
Oh, they're far above them Liverpool gals, with their dark and wavy hair.
6. They all like a jolly sailorman when he is on a spree,
They'll dance with you and drink with you and spend yer money free,
And when yer money is all gone, they'll not on you impose,
Oh they're far above them Yankee gals who'll steal an' pawn yer clothes.
7. Farewell to Valparaiso, boys, along the Chile main,
And likewise all them Spanish gals, they treated me just fine;
An' if I live to get paid off I'll sit and drink all morn,
A health to them dashin' Spanish gals that live around Cape Horn!

This late 18th century forecastle song was popular with American and British seamen alike. It opens by extolling the virtues of ship and crew. Generally, a vessel with royals set was under full sail, a pretty sight to anyone. These sails are the last squares set and the first to be taken in. The exception to this of course was in vessels carrying sails above the royal. Taut stays suggest that the rig was well tuned and under sail.

In Rio, further preparations were made for the Horn where cruel weather, towering seas, and hurricane force winds placed heavy demands on ship and crew alike. The lighter sails carried through the Trades would have to be exchanged for a heavier suit.

Many captains carried as much sail as they could, for as long as they could, in an effort to make the best time. The men sometimes found themselves aloft shortening sail under the worst conditions. In heavy weather a ship would roll and pitch unmercifully and do her best to shake a man out of the rig. His torpid hands often grasped an ice caked jackstay while his feet rested precariously on the footropes. He then had to find a forgiving moment to beat the sail into submission and tie off frozen reef points. Both men and equipment were strained to the limit, and losing a man or two under such conditions was not an uncommon occurrence. Angry seas nearly always forbade the lowering of a rescue boat.

To a man who had endured such turmoil the prospect of a South American port such as Valparaiso with fair weather, women and liquor seemed like a renewed life. Many attempted to jump ship and stay, spurning another confrontation with the Horn. A prostitute who only wanted money in exchange for her services was angelic compared to the demonic exploitations of some of the northern whores.

The name of the ship and the port in songs such as this one often changed with the singer. I must admit I was tempted to do the same.



Child Grove

This is an English country dance tune.

Handy, Me, Boys

1. Oh stretch it aft and start a song,

Chorus: Handy, me boys, so handy;

A damn fine song an' it won't take long,

Chorus: Handy, me boys, so handy.

2. A handy ship and a handy crew,
A handy mate and an old man too.

3. Oh, up aloft with tautened leech,
Hand over hand gang ye must reach.

In recording this chanty, we hauled hand over hand at the inner jib halyard, with two pulls per chorus. The squeaking of the hanks can be heard as the sail rises.

The standard verses of this chanty often turned up in other chanties. If the chantyman ran short of words while improvising he had these lines to fall back on. L.A. Smith gives us a more colorful version of the chanty:

"Sarah Jane was a kitchen-maid,
And oft-times in her kitchen I strayed."

Striking the Royals

Captain Jonathan B. Smith stands on the quarterdeck and commands greenhands, assisted by crew, in taking in sail as UNICORN approaches an anchorage in Newport Harbor.

The Sailor Likes His Bottle-0

Chorus: So early in the mornin', the sailor likes his bottle-0.

1. The mate was drunk an' he lay below to take a swig of his bottle-0,
2. The bottle-0, the bottle-0, the sailor loves his bottle-0,
3. A bottle o' rum, an' a bottle o' gin, an' a bottle o' Irish whiskey-0,
4. The baccy-0, terbaccy-0, the sailor loves his baccy-0,
5. A packet o' shag, and a packet o' cat, and a plug o' hard terbaccy-0,
6. The lassies-0, the maidens-0, the sailor loves the Judies-0,
7. A lass from the 'Pool, an' a gal from the Tyne, an' a chowlah so fine an' dandy-0,
8. A bully roughhouse, a bully roughhouse, the sailor likes a roughhouse-0,
9. A tread on me coat, an' all hands in, bully good rough an' tumble-0,
10. A sing-song-0, a sing-song-0, the sailor likes a sing-song-0,
11. A drinkin' song, a song o' love, a ditty o' seas and shipmates-0.

This Liverpool Irish chanty was used at both halyards and pumps. Any of the sailors' likes might have been mentioned. It was a favorite with the old Blackballers.

Cheap rum and stale tobacco were delights to a sailor. When freezing and wet he could in imagination climb inside the little bowl of his pipe and find a few moments of warmth and relief. On rare occasions a shot of hot rum, lime juice, and sugar--a splice of the main brace--followed an unusually demanding watch. This brought the welcome illusion of warmth to nearly frozen limbs and relief from the rigors of the deck and a fetid fore-castle.

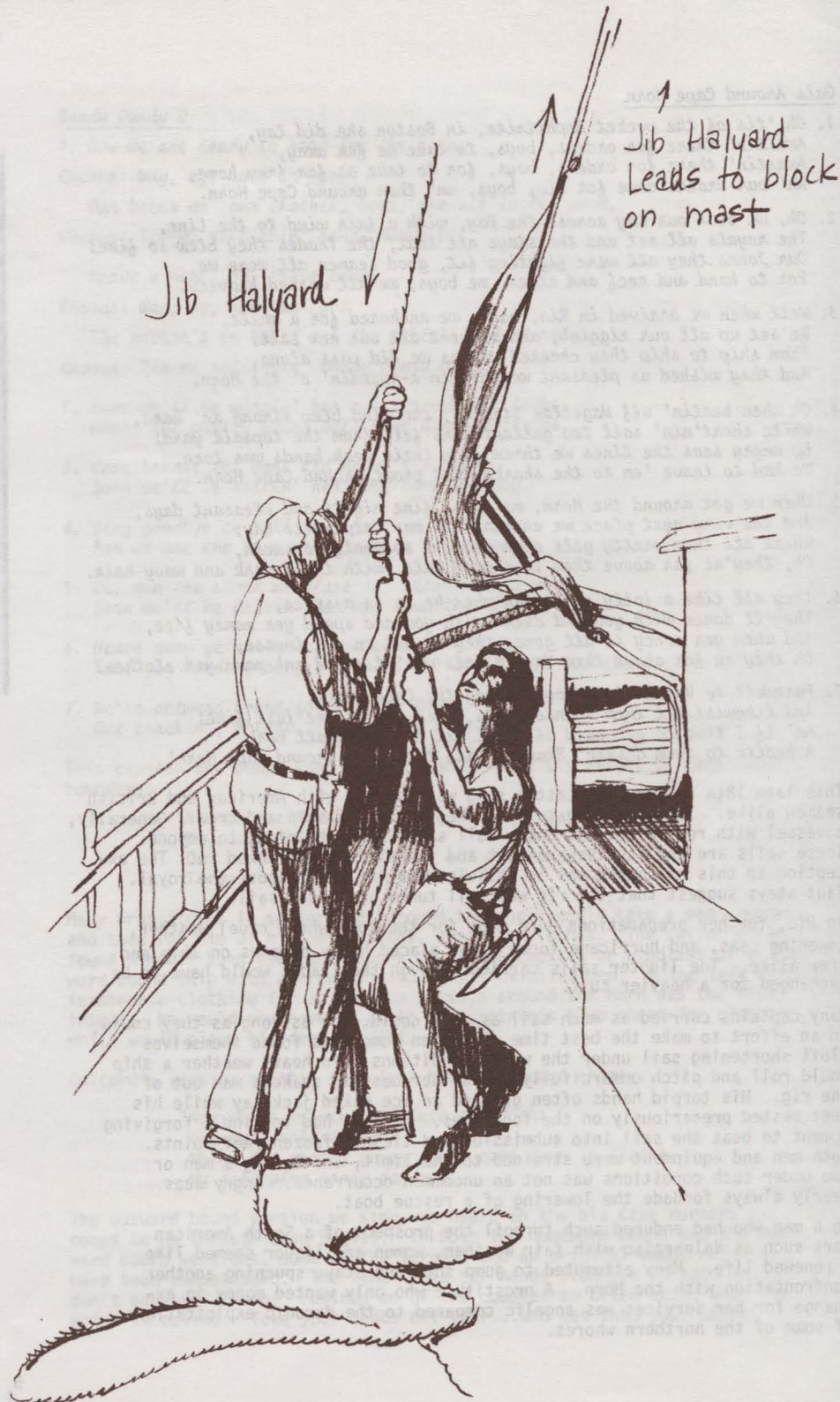
Liquor was usually the property of the ship's medical stores, as it was the only anesthesia for setting broken limbs. Influence of church groups and temperance leagues in many cases led to the instituting of Temperance Ships which forbade drinking, saving the owners money at the expense of the sailors. These groups knew nothing of the austere living conditions Jack endured for months and sometimes years at sea, seeing only the wild spree of these men as they spent a few exultant days ashore. The endless bottles of liquor referred to in this song probably didn't amount to much more than wishful thinking.

Emma Let Me Be

Chorus: Roll 'er down the bay to Juliana.

1. Emma, Emma let me be,
2. Oh Miss Emma don't you cry,
3. Pull away you bully boys,
4. Blackbird sung unto the crew,
5. Wish I had that girl in tow,
6. Oh, the dawnin' o' the day,
7. Haul away and get your pay,
8. Windward girls are hard to beat,
9. Pullin' on your old mainsheet,
10. Haul boys when she takes the roll,
11. Shake and break her, blast your soul,
12. Sweat that yard the mate did say,
13. One more pull and then belay.

This primitive one liner calls for one pull at the halyards.



The Quarrelsome Piper

This hornpipe tune comes from the revised edition of O'Neill's Music of Ireland.

Blow, Boys, Blow

1. Say was ye ever in the Congo River?

Chorus: Blow, boys, blow

Oh, yes I bin in the Congo River

Chorus: Blow, ya bully boys, blow.

2. Oh, the Congo she's a mighty river,
Where fever makes the white man shiver.

3. A Yankee ship come down the river,
Her masts all bent, her sails a-shiver.

4. Her sides wuz old an' her sails wuz rotten,
Her charts the old man had forgotten.

5. Yonder stands the Baltimore,
She fires a gun, don't ya hear the roar.

6. An' who do ya think's the gunner of her?
Oh, dirty Whitney, curse the bugger.

7. D-O-G goes to take a tinkle,
We wrapped him up in baggy wrinkle.

8. There's a Yankee ship bound out fer China,
A bunch o' bastards they have joined her.

9. And who do you think's the skipper of her?
Oh, Slimy Baker from Jamaica.

10. And who do ya think's the first mate of her?
A big mulatto from Antigua.

11. An' what do ya think they gits fer supper?
Belayin' pin soup an' a roll in the scuppers.

12. An' what do ya think they had fer carger?
Five hundred whores from Yokohama.

13. How do ya know she's a Yankee clipper?
By the blood an' guts that flow from her scuppers.

14. Blow today an' blow tomorrow,
Blow fer this ol' ship in sorrow.

The words to this chanty date to the early 1800's and probably alluded to the slave trade allowed by some disreputable captains and shipowners of the Packet Trade. The Slaving Embargo wasn't enforced until circa 1800, and the slavery and piracy of the West Indies and Guinea Coast continued until circa 1825.

Some of the song's lyrics, however, refer only to UNICORN history. Early in 1979 we spent several weeks with the Baltimore Clipper, PRIDE OF BALTIMORE,

filming the documentary, "Ghosts of Cape Horn". The Pride had a little mongrel dog named "D-O-G". When D-O-G annoyed a member of the PRIDE's crew beyond tolerance he would often be hurled mercilessly out the main hatch. On deck all one saw was a yapping beast flying six feet in the air. UNICORN's ship's cat, Mouser, boarded the PRIDE frequently and terrorized the poor dog, chasing him about the deck. One day while in a mischievous mood we wrapped D-O-G in baggy wrinkle. He accepted his new coat with indifference and strutted about looking like a canine vacuum cleaner attachment.

At the time the gunner aboard the PRIDE was Dirty Whitney Christmas, who was fond of anything that exploded. Cursing him in the song was only done in jest, as everyone liked Whitney. He made us all laugh when he wasn't busy blowing something up.

The Butterfly

This is an Irish traditional slip jig.

Strike the Bell

1. 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 longin' fer 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.

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

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

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 strike, strike the bell.

Hugill lists three shore songs which have the same tune as this pumping chanty: the Scottish tune "Ring the Bell Watchman", the Australian tune from the shearing sheds, "Click Go the Shears", and the Welsh air "Twill Back y Clo".

Aboard UNICORN "Strike the Bell" is one of our favorites. At the end of a watch everyone is ready to lay below, and the last thing anyone wishes to hear is a call for all hands.

Side B

Paddy Lay Back

1. 'Twas a cold and dreary mornin' in December,
An' all of me money was all spent;
An' where it went to Lord I can't remember,
So down to the shippin' office then I went.
- Chorus: Paddy lay back; take in the slack;
Take a turn around the capstan heave a pawl;
About ship's stations boys be handy;
Raise tacks and sheets and mainsail haul.
2. That day there was a great demand for sailors,
For the colonies, for 'Frisco, and for France;
So I shipped aboard a limey bark the Hotspur,
Got paralytic drunk on my advance.
 3. I woke up in the mornin' sick and sore, boys,
There was belayin' pins a flyin' round the deck;
And the mate come up and grabbed me by the collar,
Sayin' if you don't sing a song I'll break your neck.
 4. Now when we got to hoistin' up the topsail,
Not a man among the bunch could sing a lick:
I got up and give a verse of Reuben Ranzo,
An' the answer that I got'd make you sick.
 5. There was Spaniards, an' Dutchmen, an' Roosians,
An' Johnny Crapoos just acrossst from France;
An' most o' 'em couldn't speak a word o' English,
'Til the boardin' master said here's yer advance.
 6. Now we singled up an' got the tugs alongside,
They towed us through the locks an' out to sea;
With half the crew a-pukin' o'er the ship's side,
An' the boatswain with a rope end chasin' me.
 7. I quickly made me mind up I should jump her,
Leave the beggar an' get a job ashore;
So I swam across the bay, I went an' left her,
An' in the English bar I found a whore.

This capstan song dates back to the time African slaves worked the docks in the ports along the Gulf of Mexico. "Raise tacks and sheets" is an order given prior to making any heading change requiring substantial bracing of the yards.

The crews in the saltpeter trade of Chile sang the same song in the Cape Horners, but the last line was chanted to "we're bound for Valparaiso around the Horn." The song has many varied and interesting verses. In one version the crew reacts violently to a bad cook:

"Oh, the cook in his galley wuz a scoundrel,
At makin' sloppy hash he had a knack;
So the flat feet all went aft takin' a growlin'
An' they broke a stuns'l boom across his back."

In our version of the song the dirty business of crimps plays an important role in the seaman's plight. The chantyman is faced with a bunch of greenies who don't even know Rueban Ranzo, one of the most popular chanties ever.

The rope end, or starter as it was called in the naval service, was the bitter end of a rope which had been back spliced or otherwise manipulated to make it an effective bludgeon. In days gone by the boatswain or mate used it liberally on recalcitrant or lazy seamen. The shoulderblades were a favorite target, but to the less merciful, other parts of the anatomy were fair game. One day as UNICORN sat dockside in Boston, an elderly gentleman came aboard and looked about inquisitively. "Where's the rope end?" he asked. He explained that as cabin boy aboard the Whaler CHARLES W. MORGAN he had been urged aloft with one by some bucko of a boatswain.

Ten Thousand Miles

1. Sing ho! for a brave an' a gallant ship; an' a fair an' fav'rin' breeze,
Wi' a bully crew an' a cap'n too, to carry me o'er the seas;
To carry me o'er the seas, me boys, to me true love far away
I'm takin' a trip on a government ship ten thousand miles away.

Chorus: Then--blow, ye winds an' blow!
An' a rovin' I will go,
I'll stay no more on England's shore,
To hear the fiddler play,
For I'm on the move to me own true love,
Ten thousand miles away!

2. My true love she wuz beautiful, an' my true love she did say,
She's taken a trip on a government ship, bound out to Botany Bay;
Bound out to Botany Bay, m'boys, an' though she's far away,
I'll never forget me own true love, ten thousand miles away.
3. Oh, it wuz on a summer's morn, when last I seed my Meg,
She's a government band around each hand, an' another one 'round her leg;
Oh, another one 'round her leg, m'boys, as the big ship left the Bay,
Adieu she sez, remember me, when I'm in Botany Bay.
4. I wish I wuz a boatswain bold,
Or a sailor without fear--
I'd man a boat an' away I'd float,
An' straight for me true love steer.
An' straight for me true love steer, m'boys,
Where the whales and the dolphins play,
Where the whales an' sharks are havin' their larks,
Ten thousand miles away!
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 me beer,
Or I forget me beer, m'boys,
Or the landlord's quarter-day,
But I'll never forget me own true love,
Ten thousand miles away!

This capstan or forecastle song is excellent for light work because of its long solo. Here poor Meg is sent to the British penal colony on Van Diemen's Land (Australia) "ten thousand miles away", for some unmentionable crime!

Haul 'er Away

1. Young Sally Rackett she shipped in a packet-0

Chorus: Haul 'er away, oh, haul 'er away!

Hoo-raw, hoo-raw for young Sally Rackett-0

Chorus: Haul 'er away, oh, haul 'er away!

2. Miss Nancy Dawson, she's got flannel drawers on'

Hooraw, Hooraw for ol' Nancy Dawson-0.

3. Little Miss Muffet she sat on a tuffet.

4. Nancy Fernaner, she married a barber.

5. Young Susy Skinner, she sure is a winner.

6. Young Kitty Carson ran off with a parson.

7. Ol' Missus Duckett, she lived in a bucket.

8. Miss Betsy Baker, she married a Quaker.

9. Sweet Polly Riddle, she broke her new fiddle.

This tongue twister is harder on the chantyman than the rest of the crew. Of West Indian origin it was popular among black or chequerboard, (one black watch, one white watch), crews. Harding, the Barbadian barbarian, gave this version to Huguill.

Billy Riley

1. O Billy Riley, Mister Billy Riley

Chorus: O Billy Riley, O!

2. O Billy Riley was the master of a drogher! (2)

3. O Billy Riley had a pretty little daughter;
Pretty little daughter, but we can't get at her.

4. O Miss Riley, little Miss Riley;
How do you want me to stow your cargo?

5. Stow some forward stow some after,
Stow some forward stow some after.

The words of this one pull chanty varied according to which member of the Riley family was being honored.

Shepherd's Hey

Also known as the Headington Jig, this is a Morris Dance tune from the English countryside.

Dellahantey's

This is an Irish traditional hornpipe.

Roll, Boys, Roll

1. Oh Sally Brown she's the gal for me boys,

Chorus: Roll, boys, roll boys, roll!

Oh Sally Brown she's the gal for me boys,

Chorus: Way, high, Miss Sally Brown!

2. We're bound away down south, me boys. (2)

3. We're rollin' down to Trinidad, boys. (2)

4. Down to see Miss Lucy Loo, boys. (2)

5. Oh she's lovely aloft, an' she's lovely below,
But she's best on her back as ya very well know, boys.

6. Ol' Captain Baker, I knew him well,
But now he's died and gone to hell, boys.

7. There's forty fathoms or more below. (2)

8. Oh way hey high an' up she rises. (2)

This is a West Indian version of the Sally Brown chanty. Other versions are characterized by obscene verses and when the chantyman finished ex-tolling Sally, he often started on her daughter.

Shallow Brown

1. A Yankee ship come down the river, (2)

Chorus: Shallow, Shallow Brown (2)

2. And who do ya think's the skipper of her? (2)

3. Slushy Sam that dirty bastard. (2)

4. And who do you think's the first mate of her? (2)

5. Big Black Jack, the Boston pimp.

6. And who do ya think's the bosun of her? (2)

7. Saccarappa Joe the undertaker. (2)

8. An' what do ya think they gits fer supper? (2)

9. The starboard side of an old sou'wester,
An' three or four pulls on the weather braces.

10. Sally in the garden sifting sand,
The bosun watchin' his cap in hand.

The town Saccarappa mentioned here is an old name for the port of Westbrook, Maine.

Morgan Magan

This is one of Irish harpist O'Carolan's most popular tunes.

Coal Black Rose

1. Oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
Don't ya hear the banjo jing-a-jing jing.

Chorus: Oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose.

2. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
Strung up like a banjo string.

3. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
The yard is a-movin' hauley-hauley ho!

4. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
The mate he comes around, boys, dinging an' a dang!

5. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
Up aloft from down below!

6. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
Up to the sheave hole she must go!

7. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
Shake and break her blast your soul.

8. Well, oh, me Rosie, Coal Black Rose,
One more pull and then belay.

Leave Her Johnny

1. Oh times was hard an' the wages low

Chorus: Leave her Johnny, leave her

But now once more ashore we'll go

Chorus: An' it's time fer us to leave her

Chorus: Leave her Johnny, leave her,
Oh leave her Johnny, leave her;
Oh the voyage is done an' the winds don't blow,
An' it's time fer us to leave her.

2. Oh the wind was foul and the seas run high,
She shipped it green and none went by.

3. We'd be better off in a nice clean jail,
With all night in and plenty of ale.

4. Oh sing boys that we will never be,
In a hungry bitch the likes o' she.

5. The mate was a bucko an' the old man a Turk,
The bosun was a beggar with the middle name o' work.

6. Oh the old man swears an' the mate swears too,
The crew all swear and so would you.

7. Oh the ship won't steer, nor stay, nor wear,
An' so us Vankees learned to swear.

8. We'll leave her tight an' we'll leave her trim,
An' we'll heave the hungry bastard in.

This chanty was reserved for the end of a voyage, at the capstan, warping the ships in, or as in our version, pumping her dry one final time. The verses aired frustrations and grievances. Words, often obscene and derisive were directed at the officers, owners and food, three major sources of discomfort.

I hope that you have enjoyed listening to "Salt Atlantic Chanties" as much as we have enjoyed making the album.

Fair winds.

Thomas Sullivan
Chantyman
Brig UNICORN
September 1979

GLOSSARY

Aloft: above the deck; in the rigging, or on the yards.

Aft: towards the stern end of the ship

Anglo-conertina: similar to accordian, but smaller with buttons instead of a keyboard.

Avast: stop; hold what you have.

Baggy wrinkle: frayed line used as chafing gear on wire or rope to protect the sails.

Beat: make progress to windward

Bend sail: fasten sail to its yard, stay, gaff, or boom.

Beetle: heavy wooden hammer used for caulking

Belay: make fast; secure the line.

Belaying pin: pin of wood or metal around which a line is secured.

Bitter end: working, loose end of a piece of line.

Blackballer: packet trade ship of the Blackball line.

Boatswain (bosun): petty officer responsible for maintenance and operation of the rig and deck.

Bollard: strong post on ship or dock; for holding hawser fast.

Bow: foremost part of the ship

Brace: running rigging used to swing the yards in a horizontal plane.

Brig: two masted sailing vessel; both masts fully square rigged.

Cape Horn: southernmost tip of South America; the passage is known as one of the most difficult to be made, and a sailor that has come around the Horn has stood a test in some of the severest weather conditions on earth. Passages East to West against the prevailing West wind are generally the most difficult.

Capstan: upright winch around which hawsers are wound to hoist anchor, lift weights, etc.

Chowlah: street walker; probably of Hindustani origin.

Clew: bottom or aftermost corner of sail.

Crimp: individual who, through force or trickery, acquires a ship's crew.

Downfalls (falls): Block and tackle where the hauling force is down.

Drogher: used here derogatorily; third rate cargo carrier.

Forecastle (fo'c's'le): Compartment beneath the foredeck; used for stowage or crews quarters.

Foremast: forwardmost mast.

Furl: to secure a sail by rolling it close to its yard, mast or stay and fastening it in place with gaskets.

Gaskets: short line or canvas strap used to secure a furled sail.

Halyard: running rigging used to raise and lower sails and yards.

"To hand, to reef, to steer": expression which sums up the knowledge required of a mariner.

Hanks: shackles or horseshoe shaped pieces of metal which attach a sail to its stay.

Haul: verticle pull on a line by hand or winch.

Hawse pipe: pipe in the bow through which anchor chain or hawser runs.

Hawser: rope or cable by which a ship is anchored, moored to towed.

Heave: horizontal pull on a line by hand or winch.

Jackstay: rope or steel rod secured to the top of a yard to which the sail is fastened. Used as a hand hold while working aloft.

Larboard: port side

Lay below: to go below decks.

Leech: side edges of a squaresail; after edge of fore and aft sails.

The Line: the Equator; crossing the Line signifies joining the ranks of deep water seamen, and is usually accompanied by elaborate initiation rites.

Mainmast: principal mast.

Mains'l haul: order given on a squarerigged ship when tacking as the bow passes through the eye of the wind to bring the mainyards around to the new tack.

Morris dance: May Day folk dance once common in England; costumes associated with Robin Hood characters were often worn.

Outward bounder: ship just beginning a long passage.

Packet trade: passenger trade between the United States and England. This was the first time regularly scheduled sea passages were made.

Parcelled: canvas strips wrapped around wire or rope and tarred to protect the cable or rope from the elements.

"Parish-rigged": poorly outfitted.

Pawl: short hinged bar which prevents the capstan or windlass from slipping backward during operation.

Poop: short aftermost deck raised above the quarterdeck.

Port: looking forward, the lefthand side of the ship.

Pump: device used for drawing water up from the bilges or tanks.

Rigging: general terms for the ropes and wires of the ship.
 Standing rigging: fixed and stationary; the shrouds, stays, and backstays which support the mast.
 Running rigging: that which is reeved through blocks and sheaves; hauled upon and let go to work the sails and yards, halyards, braces, clewlines, and buntlines.

Scuppers: openings in the ship's sides to allow water to run off the deck.

Schooner: fore and aft rigged sailing ship with two or more masts; the tallest mast aft.

Served: wire or rope around which a binding has been wrapped; is done following parcelling and is usually then covered with tar.

Serving mallet: mallet scored with a semi-circular groove, used for serving a rope where maximum tautness is required.

Sheave: wheel with a grooved rim used to guide lines, etc., as through a block; a pulley.

Sheet: line or chain attached to lower corner clew of a sail; it is heaved in in or slackened to control the set of the sail.

Shorten sail: to reduce the sail area of a vessel under way by reefing or furling, or both.

Shroud: rope or wire used to support the mast laterally running from the mast to the side of the ship.

Spar: general term of any rounded piece of timber used (primarily) in the rig.

Spreader: device for aligning backstays, headstays, etc.

"Splice of the main brace": a special ration of rum issued to the crew on the completion of an arduous task.

Starboard: looking forward, righthand side of the ship.

Stay: rigging used to support the mast fore and aft; some stays carry sails known as staysails.

Strike sail: to take sail in.

Step: area reinforced to take the weight of an upright mast and provide for its secure footing.

Stern: aftermost part of the ship.

Studding sail (stuns'l): sail rigged on spars which extend out beyond the normal yards.

"Sweat the yard": bringing the yard up its last few feet by having several people pull down on the halyard as others hold the line wrapped around the base of a pin to keep it from backsliding.

Tack: line leading forward from the clew of the fore or main course.

Truck: circular piece of wood at the top of the mast, often with sheaves in it for running flag halyards.

Tye chain: chain which passes from a yard through the sheave in the mast to a halyard tackle.

Warping: bringing a ship dockside by running line to a bollard and using the windlass or capstan to bring the ship in.

Watch: time period into which the ship's day is broken dividing the work between alternating shifts of crew.

Wear ship: alter course from hard on the wind on one bow to hard on the wind on the other by passing the ship's stern through the eye of the wind.

Weigh anchor: raise the anchor.

Windlass: horizontal winch used for weighing anchor, raising spars, etc.

Windward: toward the wind; side from which the wind is blowing.

Yard: spar to which squaresails are attached; UNICORN has five yards on each mast--royal, topgallant, upper tosail, lower topsail, and course. The course is the lowermost and largest squaresail.

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*** The title of the album comes from the John Masefield
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NOTE: A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this album
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program. Further inquiries or tax deductible contri-
butions may be addressed to:

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