

SCHOONERS

GORDON BOK

It was Lois Lyman's two fine songs about the Wiscasset schooners that nudged me into putting this album together. I could pursue the theme for at least another album (including more of the older, a capella ballads, for instance) and perhaps someday I will.

But this one has taken three years (of small bursts) in Bruce Boege's studio, and it's time to saw off the end and plank a transom onto her.

It occurs to me that a song, a vessel or a voice is like a carrier-wave: a set of vibrations that makes it easier for a life to flow along it, through it. It's the difference between hauling something over land and letting it go through water.

It doesn't matter to me whether a song is old or new; if my life can carry it, it can carry me.

About the cover: I was coming across the bridge at Wiscasset at dusk one day, glanced over, and saw *Hesper* had collapsed; *Luther* was leaning over her like a kind of guardian, and I suddenly saw her for what she meant to me. That's what I carved.

I carve as I sing: to help me understand what I know.

SCHOONERS



GORDON BOK

CD005

TIMBERHEAD

GORDON BOK SCHOONERS

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Wiscasset Schooners

© 1985 Lois Lyman

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

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

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

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

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

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

And the winter . . .

From Wiscasset to the China Lakes the Narrow Gauge did run,
To push it northward to Quebec was old Frank Winter's plan –
And schooners were to bring his cargoes in to meet the train,

When he found you idle on the dock, he brought you down to Maine
Where the tides ebb and flow down below.

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

And the winter. . .

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

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

Harp Song of the Dane Women

Poem by Rudyard Kipling; Music: © 1985 Gordon Bok

Art and Marsha Krause of Spruce Head, Maine, brought this to my attention; it sounds like an old story to me. I made the tune for Ann Muir and her harp.

Gordon: vocal and 12-string

What is a woman that you forsake her
And the hearthfire, and the home-acre
To go with the old, grey widow-maker?

She has no strong white arms to fold you
But the ten-times-fingering weed to hold you
Down in the dark where the tide has rolled you.

She has no house to lay a guest in
But one chill bed for all to rest in
That the pale suns and the stray 'bergs rest in.

Yet when the signs of summer quicken
And the ice breaks, and the birch-buds thicken,
Yearly you turn from our side, and sicken.

Sicken again for the shouts and the slaughters
You steal away to the lapping waters
And look to your ship in her winter quarters.

You forget our mirth, our talk at the tables,
The kine in the shed and the horse in the stables, (cows)
To pitch her sides and go over her cables.

Then you ride out where the storm clouds swallow,
The sound of your oar-blades, falling hollow,
Is all we have left for the months to follow.

Ah, what is woman, that you forsake her
And the hearthfire, and the home-acre
To go with the old, grey widow-maker?

Jericho (Ho Ro the Wind and Snow)

A toast I made 30 years ago for the schooners we'd been sailing...in those days, it was mostly sailing skill and the shipworms holding hands that kept them in one piece.

Some friends and I were singing it one winter night aboard my temporary home, the schooner Stephen Taber, when a feisty female friend said: "Bok, for your sake, I hope that's a song about a boat..." That time, anyway, the truth set me free. "Jericho" is the name of a bay.

Gordon and Quasi Modal Chorus, with guest Wendy Cohn.

When she's a tight old staver,
Then do all you can to save her;

When she drops her dear old transom,
Time to pack your gear and leave her

Chorus:

Ho-ro, the wind and snow
Flying o'er the Jericho
When the stormy winds do blow
Swing her off and let her go.

Here's to her lodging knees
And her bobstays, if you please,
Here's to her trestle trees:
May they never leave her.

When the fog is on the punkin
And you hear the bells a-tunkin'
Then remember mumma's warnin':
Keep her off the rockpiles, darling.

Here's to the dear old lady
Here's to her paint and putty
Here's to her chainplates, darling,
May they keep her all together.

Keep her full and keep her going,
Never jybe her when it's blowing:
There's no way of knowing
When she's going to tear it, darling.

Don't you go down to the city
Tho the women all be pretty
They'll take your money, Darling,
Oh, and they'll reef your mainsail.

So here's to her garboard strakes
And to the water that she makes
When to the pumps we takes
Just to let her know we love her.

You may smile if you've a mind to, but perhaps you'll lend an ear
We've been boy and man together, close on for forty year
I've sailed across these waters from Western Banks to Grand
And in some herring vessels that hailed from Newfoundland.

I've seen some storms, I tell you, where things looked kind of blue
But somehow I was lucky, and always did come through
But I'll not brag, however: I'm not so much, but then
I'm not much easier frightened than most of other men.

This one dark night I speak of, we were offshore a ways
I never will forget it in all my mortal days
When in the darkness of my watch I felt a chilling dread
That bore me down as if I'd heard a calling from the dead.

Then o'er the rail they climbed, all silent, one by one
A dozen dripping sailors – just wait till I have done -
And on the deck they assembled, but not a voice was heard
They moved about together there, but never said a word.

Their faces, pale and sea-wet shone ghostly through the night
And each one took his station as if he had a right
And Eastward steered the vessel till land was just in sight,
Or rather, I should say we saw the lighthouse tower's light.

And then those ghostly sailors moved to the rail again
And vanished in the morning mist before the sun of man
We sailed right up the harbor, and every mother's son
Will tell you the same story, the same as I have done.

They are the same poor sailors – I pray God rest their souls –
That our old craft ran over one night near George's shoals
And now you have my story, to you I will confess
I have believed in spirits from that day until this.

Spirit Song of George's Bank / The Ghostly Sailors (Trad.)

One of the many fine ghost stories of the sea, this song can be found from Maine to Newfoundland. Thanks to Valentine Doyle and Dick Swain for helping me remember it.

The story I heard was that the schooner *Haskell*, out of Gloucester, was anchored near George's when a sudden gale parted her ground tackle and she went charging, bare-poled, down through the fleet. She cut the schooner *Johnston* almost in two, killing all her men. On every voyage thereafter, a crew would appear on her deck at night and go through the motions of fishing. After a few trips, no crew would even sign on her, and she rotted at the wharf.

Gordon & cellamba

Liza Jane

Words J.B. Connolly; Music © 1992 Gordon Bok

At Art Krause's house one winter, I found these words in one of James B. Connolly's novels: "The Seiners." I don't know if it is a traditional song or not, so I attribute it to Connolly.

This vessel had a lot going against her; in some places, painting any part of a vessel blue is horrible bad luck.

Gordon and twelve-string.

Oh the *Liza Jane* with a blue foremast
And a load of hay come drifting past
The skipper stood aft and he says: "How do?
We're the *Liza Jane*, now who be you?"
—Stood by the wheel and he says: "How do,
We're from Bangor, Maine. From where be you?"

Oh the *Liza Jane* left port one day
With a fine fair tide and the day Friday,
But the damned old tide sent her bow askew
And the *Liza Jane* began to slew
—Hi diddle di, she'da' fairly flew
If she only could said the other-end-to.

Oh the *Liza Jane* left port one day
With her hold full of squash and her deck all hay
Put out from Bath with all sails set —
Two years gone, she's drifting yet.
—Hi diddle di, for a good old craft
She'da' sailed very well with her bow on aft.

Now the *Liza Jane* got a new foretruck
Good stick of wood but it wouldn't stay stuck
Got a breeze one day from the NNW
Doggone thing come down with the rest:

—Hi diddle di and a breeze from the West
You'd'a thunk the truck wouldn't stuck with the rest.

Boat of Silver

© 1980 J.B. Goodenough

It must have been a dozen years ago that Judy sent this to me. I took her second verse and made a chorus of it. Before she died, she told me she liked it with a simple voice and guitar, with maybe a few voices on the chorus, so I include it here that way, with the quiet Quasi Modals (with guest Wendy Cohn) and a nylon-strung six string.

There's many ships tarry in the harbor,
Many roads wind across the hill;
And many roses grow on the arbor,
Many's the girl waits for me there still.

For swiftly come all the tides returning;
Swiftly go then and will not stay.
There is no boatman can net the morning;
There is no boatman can net the day.

The fish run deep, oh, they run so deeply
I cannot find them in the seas.
The lonely road winds the hill so steeply,
I'll lay me down now and take my ease.

The rose that blooms blows its petals over
And the thorns lie upon the bough.
The girls have gone now to a different lover;
They will not linger beside me now.

I will build me a boat of silver,
Steer it with a golden oar,
And I will row out of this sad harbor
And never sail back to this dark shore.

The Schooner *Ellenmore*

© 1992 Gordon Bok

This is a true story, told to me by an old shipmate. She didn't know that I knew both the people involved, which made it all the sadder. So I changed the location and the schooner's name and made it into a song, to remind myself not to be doing the same. *Ellenmore*, by the way, is from the Gaelic words: Eilean Mor – the big island. (I finished the song in Scotland in 1990.)

The first time I saw *Ellenmore*, it was on a southeast wind
Against the loom of the coming storm I saw her topsail gleam
Her lines were long and lovely as she stood in from the bay
And I stood on the dragger's deck and gave my heart away.

She rounded up and ran her chain, her gear was stowed and furled
I saw but two upon her deck, an old man and a girl
As I rowed by they hailed me, and we passed the time of day
And spoke of the wind and the holding ground, and how their schooner lay.

The next day blowing cold and grey, they hailed me once again;
I went on board to drink their tea and talk and watch the rain.
The schooner old and graceful, and built for any weather
And they were kind and gentle folks, the young girl and her father.

I walked the island with the girl, I watched it take her heart;
This land is kind in the summertime, tho summer months are short:
The sudden hills, the quiet coves, the meadows in the rain
The gentle grace of fir and spruce when snow and wind are gone.

Her hair was brown, her hands were brown, her face was brown and wise,
I watched her place her quiet feet and felt her quiet eyes,
For I had been a lonely man with neither laugh nor song
And each year since my Janey died was twelve Novembers long.

Back on board that evening, in the schooner's warm saloon
We spoke of boats and harbors and the islands we had known.

They said they'd searched for years to find a place to spend their days
And here they'd found their paradise – the island and its ways.

The wind was in the mastheads and the seas were hissing by
And oh, the wine and song that night will hold me till I die
And as I stepped o'er the schooner's rail she took me by the hand
And I told her I would bless the tide that brought her here again.

But oh, the months that followed were a weary weight to bear
For I knew I'd been above myself when the wine was flowing fair
To think she'd ever want a man who made a pauper's wage
Much less a simple fisherman, and half again her age.

The next time I saw *Ellenmore* it was Autumn, cold and wet;
She come swinging up the outer bay with just her lowers set,
But I couldn't bear their kindness, nor could I forget my shame,
And I hoped the wine had been so kind they'd not recall my name.

So I swung out past the harbor ledge and drove on down the sound
And hoped they'd never know me from the other boats around,
But as I passed, I saw the girl come out on deck to stand
And across the moving water she lifted up her hand.

The next time I saw *Ellenmore*, it was in the early May
And four long years had hauled their tides since she had passed this way
I saw the old man on her deck, he sailed her all alone
As past the island's shoulder her threadbare mainsail swung.

He rounded up and ran his chain, his movements slow and spare
And late that day I rowed across, another meal to share.
The boat was old, the man was old, the years had had their way;
He asked me if I liked my life, and I had naught to say.

I asked him of his daughter, but he only shook his head:
"She wed a Corporation-Man; she chose her life," he said,

"She might have had a simple man, her simple love to share.
She saw you go out by the ledge: that broke her heart for fair."

The last time I saw *Ellenmore*, she was standing out to sea,
All plain sail on a Northeast wind, her mainsheet running free.
The old man stood beside her wheel, to me he raised his hand,
And I stood on the dragger's deck and watched the day go down.

Crossing the Water

Words & Music © 1989 Joanne Davis

Joanne wrote this song at the Pinewoods Camp's Folk Music week. She first performed it there with cello, concertina and harp. I've accompanied it in various ways; here, with twelve-string and Quasi Modals.

I have seen you leave the shore at sunrise
I have felt your oars as they glide
I have poured you honey from the morning sun
Heard you call to the other side.
I have carried your voice along the wind
I have tumbled it on the tide
I have lifted it as its sound grew dim, swallowed it as it died.

You may row the boat forever, believing you are free
You cannot cross the water, you can only row to me.

I have seen you pause at midday
Your hands all tired and sore
I have heard you curse yourself for a fool
That you had not progressed more.
And I've heard you curse the water for keeping you from the land
Even as you reached for me to cool your weary hand.

You may row the boat forever, there is nowhere I won't be
You cannot cross the water, you can only row to me.

I have seen you in the sunset with a compass in your hand
I have felt you change direction trying to reach the land.
And I've seen you looking homeward
Ah, but sailor this water is wide
If you knew my voice I would tell you, lay the oars aside.

For you'll turn the boat forever, I am neither lake nor sea
You cannot cross the water, you can only row to me.

You may row the boat forever, there is nowhere I won't be.
You cannot cross the water, you can only row to me.

All My Sailors

Words & Music © 1992 Gordon Bok, Timberhead Music

Sailing an old boat back to Maine last year, I was reminded of the many people who have helped me over the years. Not just the older friends who tried to give me their wisdom and the skills to stay alive, but all those others too, whose company makes it so worth living.

The first boat I put out to sea
I didn't know where that boat was going
All I want was away from here and all I knew was keep on rowing.
The first boat I took out to sea
I wouldn't have none to sail with me
None to row and none to tow and none to stow my cargo down.

But I come a rollin' through the calm
And all my guiding stars were gone
There was three old sailors by my helm, tell me I don't sail alone.
One named Peter, one named Saul
And one don't claim no name at all
One to sing and one to haul and one to heave me when I fall.

When I stumble on the reef

I've got three good sailors take my grief
One to sail and one to bail and one to hold me when I wail.

So when the wind comes stavin' more
I won't need to run for harbor
I don't need to reef and tack 'cause I don't need to bring her back.
And fog and foul or fair and free
Its all the flamin' same to me
Cause all the good hands ever sail are rollin' down my weather rail.

And when I come for makin' land
I've got three good sailors to my hand
One to stay and one to pray and one to lay this anchor down.
And if I hoist my sail again
Come in sun or go in rain
All the sailors in the sea come hand and haul and steer with me.
One to row and one to tow and one to ease me when I go.
One to row and one to tow and one to heave me when I go.

The Death Ship

Words B. Traven; Music © 1981 Gordon Bok

From a novel by the mysterious B. Traven; this poem struck me as a place many of us come to in our lives, and (bless the tide), come out of again.
Nick Apollonio, viola; Paul Schaffner, hammered dulcimer; Gordon, cellamba & vocal.

Oh hush your cryin' honey dear
The Jackson Square remains still here
In sunny New Orleans, in lovely Louisiana.

She thinks me buried in the sea
She can no longer wait for me
In sunny New Orleans, in lovely Louisiana.

I am not buried in the sea

The Death Ship is now part of me
So far from sunny New Orleans, so far from lovely Louisiana.

It is the Death Ship I am in
All have I lost, nothing to win
So far from sunny New Orleans, so far from lovely Louisiana.

So hush your cryin' honey dear
I am not there nor you are here
So far from sunny New Orleans, so far from lovely Louisiana.

Schooner *Fred Dunbar*

Words: Amos Hanson; Music: Gordon Bok

A friend sent me these words a few years back. The song was made by Amos Hanson of Orland, Maine about 1850 or 1860 and became quite popular along the coast. It was collected in N. Blue Hill from Mrs. Emery Howard and her son Julian in 1932. Both Sandy Ives and Dick Swain know the 'real' tune and more complete verses, but I didn't think to ask them in time. This is my truncated version, then, with a tune of my own.

You darlin' girls of Bagaduce who live along the shore
Tis little do you think or know what sailors do endure
Or if you did, you'd treat them with more respect than before
You never would go with a land loper while sailors are ashore.

Oh those Penobscot cowboys will tell you girls fine tales
Of all the hardships they endure when they are in the cornfields
They'll feed their hens and punch their pigs and make their mothers roar
While we like jovial hearted lads go to the Bay Chaleur.

On board of the Schooner *Fred Dunbar* well found in fishing gear
We crowded on our canvas for Green's Landing we did steer.
When we arrived at anchor, the sun was setting low.
'Twas there we shipped young Stinson and Captain Mood Thurlow.

When we arrived at Port Musgrave we hauled in for our salt
We took our little fiddle ashore to have a little waltz
It was twelve of us when we started, our songs through the woods did roar
When we arrived I was surprised I could not count but four.

On the first day of September broad off Cape Mardeau
We struck a squall from the south southeast which broke her boom in two.
So gallantly she weathered it and it was fine to see
Her walk to the windward with mainsail down bound out for Margaree.

On the last day of September I will remember well
What we poor sailors do endure no tongue can ever tell
The winds grew strong, the seas grew rough in torrents fell the rain
I never saw such a night as that and I hope I shan't again.

You darlin' girls of Bagaduce, the time is drawing nigh
When you will see the Stars and Stripes from our main topsail fly
Get ready, gallant lassies, put on your other gown
For soon you'll see the *Fred Dunbar* come sailing up to town.

And now our voyage is over and we are safe ashore
With our pockets full of greenbacks that we've earned in the Bay Chaleur
So merrily we'll dance and sing as we have done before
And when our money is all spent we'll plow the old bay for more.

Capt. Dave's Delight

© Jim Stewart

Jim Stewart, of Saint John, NB made this hornpipe for Capt. Dave Kennedy a few years ago. Carol Rohl (the harper of Odivere) and I play it on harp and cellamba. (It was Carol who programmed this album, by the way.)

Another Bay

© 1988 Robin Chotzinoff

Robin, a fine singer and songwriter from Denver, Colorado, sent me this song about her friends back on Long Island, NY. The original white settlers of that area, the "Bonackers" (who lived mostly around Acabonack Creek and Harbor) are more and more hard pressed to make a living in that increasingly crowded and polluted place.

Both Robin and I have apparently changed the words a little over the years. She says she's not fussy about it, but I include the words she originally sent to me in the booklet. The arrangement here is mostly Robin's own; the twelve-string is only trying to give the flavor of her strong piano-playing.

It wasn't like this last year
It wasn't like this at all
We were taking the blues and the groupers
From February into the fall
You have to ask yourself what happened
When you're up against the wall
It wasn't like this last year
It wasn't like this at all.

Speak, speak Bonac
It's a fair gant end to the bayman's day
Speak, speak Bonac
All the children are moving away
Has it come down plain
Is it time to seine
On another bay?

And could these be the Lesters
Who used to run this town
When the right whale swam off Ponquoque
They would sail their tall ships down
There were Lesters in the rigging

Lesters on the Sound
Could these old men be the Lesters
Who used to run this town?

Speak, speak Bonac. . .

Last night when you went fishing
And I saw you face to face
I knew as clear as a bell through the fog
That you'd never leave this place
No more can the hunter in the sky
Give up his fruitless chase
It's as clear as a bell through the fog at night
When I saw you face to face
It's as clear as a bell through the fog at night
That you'll never leave this place.

Speak, speak Bonac. . .

Sailor's Carol

Words: Charles Causley; Music & Arrangement © Gordon Bok

Kate Barnes of Appleton, Maine, sent me this poem. After thinking about it for a couple of years I spent the corners of a winter working out this tune and arranging it for the chorus. The Quasi Modals, of course, helped me sort out the problems (we're still working on that part).

Gordon and Quasi Modal Chorus.

Lord, the snowful sky
In this pale December
Fingers my clear eye
Lest seeing I remember

Not the naked baby
Weeping in the stable
Nor the singing boys
All round my table.

Not the dizzy star
Bursting on the pane
Nor the leopard sun
Pawing the rain

Only the deep garden
Where green lillies grow
And the sailors rolling
In the sea's blue snow.

A Sailor's Consolation

Words: Charles Dibdin*; Music: Traditional

Dibdin wrote many "sailors' songs" back in the 1700's in England. Not many have gone into tradition. Bob Zentz of Norfolk, Virginia, sent me this one last summer; he had set it to the tune of *The Recruited Collier*, which it fits handsomely. He played it on concertina, which the cellamba here reflects. Thanks for another good one, brother Bob.

*The only place I have seen this poem in print had it attributed to William Pitt.
Gordon & cellamba.

One night came on a hurricane,
The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline turned his quid,
And said to Billy Bowline:
"A strong nor'wester's blowing, Bill,
Hark! Don't you hear it roar now?
Lord help them! How I pity all
Unhappy folks on shore now.

"Foolhardy chaps that live in towns;
What dangers they are all in,
And now lie shaking in their beds
for fear the roof should fall in.
Poor creatures, how they envy us
And wishes, I've a notion,*
(*Also seen: "And wish, as I've a notion...")
For our good luck in such a storm
To be upon the ocean.

“And as for them who’re out all day
On business from their houses,
And late at night are coming home
To cheer their babes and spouses;
While you and I, Bill, on the deck
Are comfortably lying,
My eyes! What tiles and chimney-pots
Around their heads are flying!

And very often have we heard
How men are killed and undone
By overturns of carriages,
By thieves and fires in London.
We know what risks all landsmen run
From noblemen to tailors;
Then Bill, let us thank Providence
That you and I are sailors.”

Karl Edstrom and the *Hesper*

© 1988 Lois Lyman; Music: Traditional

A few years ago the friends of the Wiscasset Schooners were trying to raise funds to “stabilize” them. They received a letter from Karl, who had sailed in *Hesper* when they were both young. Someone went to the nursing home to tape his recollections of those days. It was from this story that Lois made the song, and put it to the tune *The Swarthfell Rocks*.

My name is Karl Edstrom, I am eighty years old,
And I heard that you’re trying to save the *Hesper*.
I joined her crew in ‘twenty one – for Le Havre we were bound –
I was twenty then, and I never will forget her.

She was cloud-white and long, and her four masts so lofty
That her topsails seemed to pierce the sky above her.
She was strong and deep and wide, timberports on either side;

When I looked at her, I thought that she was lovely.

We sailed out of Rockland with a crew of nine men
And her hold was just as full as we could pack her.
She was loaded down and slow with logwood and coal
And her bottom was so foul we could not tack her.

Caleb Haskell was master and the mate was his son
And a tougher bastard never sailed blue-water
For no matter what we tried he would not be satisfied,
And he drove us all the time we were aboard her.

When we landed in France the dockside was swarming
With peddlars and ladies so charming.

“Where are the men?” the ladies cried: they could not believe their eyes
That only nine of us had brought her to this landing.

The cook got so drunk that we all ate on shore
And I thought the Old Man would hire another,
But the captain said: “Let him be, for he’s sober out to sea,
And he makes a better pie than my mother.”

Rolling out to Venezuela we sang and made music,
Played cribbage, killed rats and stood our watches.
We arrived on Christmas day, over New Year’s we lay,
Loading goat manure until it reached the hatches.

In Charleston, Carolina, they paid off my time
I said goodbye to my mates and there I left her.
It’s been fifty years for me since I made a life at sea;
Now and then I think of Haskell and the *Hesper*.

So here’s my ten dollars to help you restore her
For it makes me sad that ships like her are gone, now.
But it grieves me even more to see her rotting on the shore
Who rode the waves like a snowy gull in summer.

Song for the *Bowdoin*

Words & Music by Larry Kaplan; © 1976 Hannah Lane Music, BMI

The schooner *Bowdoin*, built for Donald MacMillan, made 26 trips to the arctic. Retired to Mystic Seaport, she was brought back to Camden in the 1960's. Larry made a song about her (which T.B.M. still sings) called "John", about Capt. John Nugent, who lived aboard her many years and was mostly the one who kept her alive in those hard times. She recently returned to the Labrador under Capt. Andy Chase where children of the original inhabitants there visited her with great joy, fulfilling Larry's vision of her so many years ago.

Larry's version and mine have diverged over the years. You may hear his singing of this and many others on a Folk Legacy album – coming soon.

You sailed the cold waters of the great Northern Bays
The ice in your rigging and your rail in the waves
And the snow in your canvas like a winter-gull's wing
Oh, Lord, all the times you've been through.

And now you've got hard times and now you lie still
And you're fast to the anchor and chain
Broken and tired and the winds pass you by
But you're bound to go sailing again.

You sailed out of Boothbay on the soft Southern swell
Wind on your quarter, your bows rose and fell
So many remember so much more than they'll tell (sic)
of the hardest of times you've been through.

Greenland and Baffin and the white Labrador
In the winds and the terrible snow
When they carried their icepicks just to bring you about
In the light from the lanterns below.

And now –

So rest, lady, rest from the fog and the gales,
Let the harbor protect you and the wind dry your sails
And a hundred old sailors tell their foggiest tales
Of all the hard times you've been through.

And we'll see your masts mingle with the spruces and pines
And we'll bow as we all pass you by
for a boat is more patient than a sailor can be
With the sun and the wind in his eye. . .

And now –

All the Dear Old Vessels

© 1992 Gordon Bok

This one's for the schooner *Stephen Taber*, who's been a 'good luck boat' to many good and wiley dreamers; she gave many their start in the trade, and they in turn have kept her going. And to all the others who have built or kept the schooners, who know so well we're all out there together: here's to you.

- 1 Here's to you all you dreamers, here's to you
- 2 Here's to you all you dreamers, here's to you.
- 1, 2 May the wind come easy o'er your weather-rail
- 1, 2 And the crazy dreams you build always prevail
- 1, 2 May your friends be ever steady as the tide
- 1, 2 And your eyes and your horizons ever wide
- 2 May they never fail
- 1, 2 And to all the dear old vessels, may they sail
- 2 May they ever sail
- 1, 2 Long may they sail!

Note: 1 being the higher voices (either gender) 2 being the lower voices (either gender)

GORDON BOK SCHOONERS

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P.O. Box 840
Camden, Maine 04843



Timberhead
CD005

1. Wiscasset Schooners 4:55
2. Harp Song of the Dane Women 3:07
3. Jericho 2:40
4. Spirit Song of Gorge's Bank 3:32
5. The *Liza Jane* 2:22
6. Boat of Silver 4:23
7. Schooner *Ellenmore* 6:10
8. Crossing the Water 4:08
9. All My Sailors 3:10
10. The Death Ship 3:50
11. Schooner *Fred Dunbar* & Capt. Dave's Delight 4:41
12. Another Bay 4:20
13. Sailor's Carol 3:35
14. Sailor's Consolation 2:40
15. Karl Edstrom and the *Hesper* 5:35
16. Song for *Bowdoin* 4:06
17. Dear Old Vessels 0:51

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GORDON BOK
SCHOONERS

1. Wiscasset Schooners (Lyman) 4:55
2. Harp Song of the Dane Women (Kipling/Bok) 3:07
 3. Jericho (Bok) 2:40
4. Spirit Song of Gorge's Bank (Trad.) 3:32
5. The *Liza Jane* (Connolly/Bok) 2:22
6. Boat of Silver (Goodenough) 4:23
7. Schooner *Ellenmore* (Bok) 6:10
8. Crossing the Water (Davis) 4:08
9. All My Sailors (Bok) 3:10
10. The Death Ship (Traven/Bok) 3:50
11. Schooner *Fred Dunbar* & Capt. Dave's Delight (Trad./Bok/Stewart) 4:41
 12. Another Bay (Chotzinoff) 4:20
 13. Sailor's Carol (Causley/Bok) 3:35
 14. Sailor's Consolation (Dibdin/Trad.) 2:40
15. Karl Edstrom and the *Hesper* (Lyman/Trad.) 5:35
 16. Song for *Bowdoin* (Kaplan) 4:06
 17. Dear Old Vessels (Bok) 0:51

With:

Lois Lyman & Ross Faneuf, *vocals*
Nick Apollonio & Doreen Conboy, *fiddle & viola*
Carol Rohl, *harp* • Paul Schaffner, *hammered dulcimer*
The Quasi Modal Chorus, *vocals*

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