The Greenland Fishery



On March the twentieth day;

We hoist our colours to the mast, And for Greenland bore away, brave boys! And for Greenland bore away.

We were twelve gallant men aboard And to the North did steer. Old England left we in our wake, We sailors knew no fear, brave boys! We sailors knew no fear.

Our boatswain to the mast-head went, Wi' a spy glass in his hand, He cries, A whale! A whale doth blow, She blows at every span, brave boys! She blows at every span. Our captain on the master deck, (A very good man was he), Overhaul! Overhaul! and let the boat-tackle fall, And launch your boat to sea, brave boys! And launch your boat to sea.

Our boat being launched, and all hands in, The whale was full in view, Resolved was then each seaman bold To steer where the whale-fish blew, brave boys! To steer where the whale-fish blew.

The whale was struck, and the line paid out, She gave a flash of her tail; The boat capsized, and we lost four men, And never caught the whale, brave boys! And never caught the whale.

Bad news we to the Captain brought, The loss of four men true. A sorrowful man was our Captain then, And the colours down he drew, brave boys! And the colours down he drew.

The losing of this whale said he, Doth grieve my heart full sore; But the losing of four gallant men Doth hurt me ten times more, brave boys! Doth hurt me ten times more.

The winter star doth now appear, So, boys, the anchor weigh; 'Tis time to leave the cold country, And for England bear away, brave boys! And for England bear away.

For Greenland is a barren place, A land where grows no green; But ice and snow, and the whale-fish blow, And the daylight's seldom seen, brave boys! And the daylight's seldom seen!