

Capital Ship

Verse

A cap - i - tal ship for an oc - ean trip Was the
"Wal - lo - ping Win - dow Blind". No wind that blew dis -
mayed her crew Or troub - led the cap - tain's mind. The
man at the wheel was made to feel Con - tempt for the wild - est
blow - ow - ow. Tho' it oft ap - peared when the
gale had cleared That he'd been in his bunk be - low. So,
blow ye winds, heigh ho, A - ro - ving I will go. I'll
stay no more on Eng - land's shore So let the mus - ic
play - ay - ay. I'm off for the mor - ning train, To
cross the rag - ing main. I'm off to my love with a
box - ing glove ten thous - and miles a - way.

Chorus

1. A capital ship for an ocean trip
Was the "Walloping Window Blind".
No wind that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind.
The man at the wheel was made to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow-ow-ow.
Tho' it oft appeared when the gale had cleared
That he'd been in his bunk below.

Chorus:

So, blow ye winds, heigh-ho,
A-roving I will go.
I'll stay no more on England's shore
So let the music play-ay-ay.
I'm off for the morning train,
To cross the raging main.
I'm off to my love with a boxing glove
ten thousand miles away.

2. The bos'un's mate was very sedate,
Yet fond of amusement too.
He played hop-scotch with the starboard watch
While the captain tickled the crew.
The gunner he was apparently mad
For he sat on the after ra-ra-rail
And fired salutes with the captain's boots
In the teeth of a booming gale.

Chorus

3. The captain sat on the commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
Off pickles & figs & little roast pigs
And gunners bread each day.
The cook was Dutch and behaved as such
For the diet he served the crew-ew-ew
Was a couple of tons of hot-cross buns
Served up with sugar and glue.

Chorus

4. Then we all fell ill as mariners will
On a diet that's rough and crude
And we shivered and shook as we dipped the cook
In a tub of his gruesome food.
All nautical pride we cast aside
And we ran the vessel asho-o-ore
On the Gulliby Isles where the poopoo smiles
And the rubbily ubdugs roar.

Chorus

5. Composed of sand was that favored land
And trimmed with cinnamon straws
And pink and blue was the pleasing hue
Of the ticke-toe teaser's claws.
We sat on the edge of a sandy ledge
And shot at the whistling bee-ee-ee
While the rugabug bats wore waterproof hats
As they dipped in the shining sea.

Chorus

6. On rugabug bark from dawn till dark
We dined till we all had grown
Uncommonly shrunk when a Chinese junk
Came up from the Terrible Zone.
She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care
So, we cherrily put to sea-ea-ea
And we left all the crew of the junk to chew
On the bark of the rubabug tree

"Capital Ship" also known as "Blow, Ye Winds, Heigh-Ho" and "The Walloping Window-Blind" is not actually a sea chanty. It is actually a British music hall song by American children's literature author Charles Edward Carryl (1841 – 1920) and set to a tune known as "Ten Thousand Miles Away". How it got from an American author to a British music hall is anyone's guess.

The original poem was published in 1885.

The nonsensical lyrics and verse style are similar to the poems of Lewis Carrol of "Alice in Wonderland" fame.

The window blind reference in the first verse brings to mind the "furl the window blind" verse of "Paddy West".

Some sources report that in the 1920's, British music hall performances were sometimes done in Gilbert and Sullivan style which may explain the popularity of the song.

My first memory of this tune comes from early in my violin lessons. I thought it was just another made-up tune for a lesson but my family seemed to know it. I hadn't thought about it for many years but it seems to stick with me.

It was recorded by Bounding Main on **Lost at Sea** (2005), Glen Yarborough on **Come Sit by My Side** (1957) and Natalie Merchant on **Leave Your Sleep** (2010).

Glenda Jackson performed it in **The Muppet Show** episode 507 with her crew of muppet pirates.