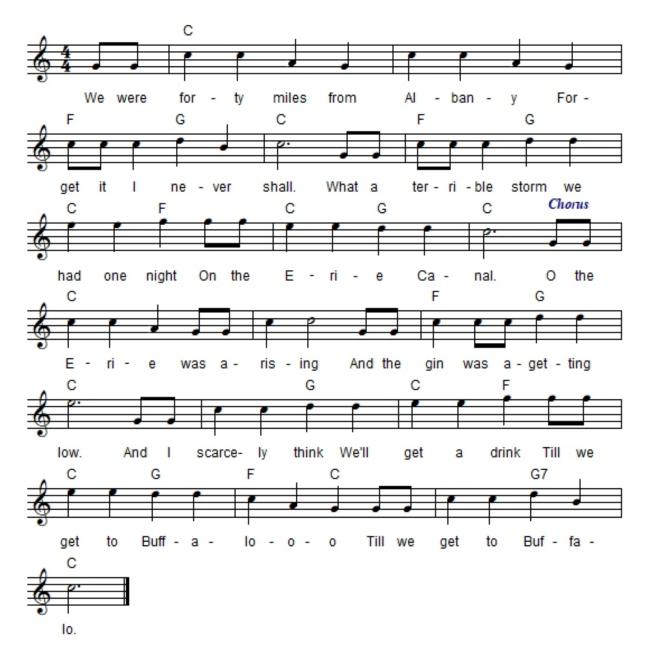
The E-ri-e Canal



 We were forty miles from Albany Forget it I never shall. What a terrible storm we had one night On the E-ri-e Canal.

Chorus:

O the E-ri-e was a-rising And the gin was a-getting low. And I scarcely think We'll get a drink Till we get to Buff-a-lo-o-o Till we get to Buffalo.

- We were loaded down with barley We were chock-full up on rye. The captain he looked down at me With his gol-durned wicked eye. Chorus
- Two days out from Syracuse The vessel struck a shoal; We like to all be foundered On a chunk o' Lackawanna coal. Chorus

- 4. We hollered to the captain On the towpath, treadin' dirt He jumped on board and stopped the leak With his old red flannel shirt. Chorus
- 5. The cook she was a grand old gal Stood six foot in her socks.Had a foot just like an elephant And her breath would open locks.Chorus
- 6. The wind begins to whistle The waves begin to roll We had to reef our royals On that ragin' canal. **Chorus**

- 7. The cook came to our rescue She had a ragged dress; We h'isted her upon the pole As a signal of distress.Chorus
- 8. When we got to Syracuse Off-mule, he was dead; The nigh mule got blind staggers We cracked him on the head. **Chorus**
- 9. The cook is in the Police Gazette The captain went to jail; And I'm the only son-of-a-gub That's left to tell the tale. **Chorus**

Far from being a sailing song, "The E-ri-e Canal" is a song written probably sometime during the 1800's about life on the Erie Canal. It tells the story of a problem ridden trip from Albany to Buffalo. The canal men were more teamsters than sailors, their main duty being to manage the horses or mules used to pull the barges. The trip between Albany and Buffalo was 363 miles. The canal had 36 locks and an elevation differential of about 565 feet. It opened on October 26, 1825. This system preceded the development of the railways and allowed larger cargos to be carried than wagons. It has been recorded by Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, The Hardtackers and others.

This is not the same song as "The Erie Canal", also known as "Low Bridge, Everybody Down" or "Fifteen miles on the Erie Canal" which is a song composed in 1905 by Thomas S. Allen. I learned this song from **The Burl Ives Songbook**.