

Stormalong



1. Old Stormy he is dead and gone
To me way you Stormalong!
But now he's dead an' gone to rest,
Ay! Ay! ay! Mister Stormalong!
2. Of all ol' skippers he was best,
But now he's dead an' gone to rest,
3. He slipped his cable off Cape Horn,
Close by the place where he was born.
4. Oh, off Cape Horn where he was born,
Our sails wuz torn an' our mainmast gorn.
5. We'll dig his grave with a silver spade.
His shroud of finest silk was made.
6. We lowered him down with a golden chain,
Our eyes all dim with more than rain.
7. He lies low In his salt-sea bed,
Our hearts are sore, our eyes wuz red.
8. An able searnan bold an' true,
A good ol' skipper to his crew.
9. He's moored at last an' furled his sail,
No danger now from wreck or gale.
10. Old Stormy heard the Angel call,
So sing his dirge now one an' all.
11. Oh, now we'll sing his funeral song,
Oh, roll her over, long an' strong.
12. Old Stormy loved a sailors' song,
His voice was tough an' rough an' strong.
13. His heart wuz good an' kind an' soft,
But now he's gone 'way up aloft.
14. For fifty years he sailed the seas,
In winter gale and summer breeze.
15. But now Ol' Stormy's day is done;
We marked the spot where he is gone.
16. So we sunk him under with a long, long
roll,
Where the sharks'll have his body, an' the
devil have his soul.
17. An' so Ol' Stormy's day wuz done,
South fifty six, west fifty one.
18. Ol' Stormy wuz a seaman bold,
A Grand Ol' Man o' the days of old.

"Stormalong", also known as "Captain Stormalong" was originally sung around the pumps and later used as a capstan shanty.

According to Hugill there is no doubt it is of African-American origin. It dates to at least the 1830s and 40s. He lists several shanties of the "Stormalong family"; "Mister Stormalong", "Stormy Along", "John, Stormalong", "Stormy", "Way Stormalong John" and "Yankee John". Most of these were halyard shanties, but "Mister Stormalong" and "Storm Along, John" were also sung at the pumps.

There are numerous versions of the lyrics. Most lament the passing of Captain Stormalong. Several are livelier versions that speak of feats of seamanship to be done in his honor.

Several of the verses, particularly the descriptions of the burial with the "silver spade" and the "Golden chain", are similar to those in "Deep Blue Sea" and the old ballad of "Cock Robin".

The song was printed in Davis' **Fifty Sailors' Songs or "Chanties"** (1870) and Hugill's **Shanties from the Seven Seas** (1987).