

Mingulay Boat Song

Sir Hugh S. Robertson



1. Heel yo ho, boys; let her go, boys;
Bring her head round, into the weather,
Heel you ho, boys, let her go, boys
Sailing homeward to Mingulay
2. What care we though, white the Minch is?
What care we for wind or weather?
Let her go boys; every inch is
Sailing homeward to Mingulay.
3. Wives are waiting, by the pier head,
Or looking seaward, from the heather;
Pull her round, boys, then you'll anchor
'Ere the sun sets on Mingulay.
4. Ships return now, heavy laden
Mothers holdin' bairns a-cryin'
They'll return, though, when the sun sets
They'll return to Mingulay.

This was written by Sir Hugh S. Robertson (1874–1952) in the 1930s. The melody is described in Robertson's **Songs of the Isles** as a traditional Gaelic tune, probably titled "Lochaber".

Mingulay is one of the southernmost islands of the Outer Hebrides off the north west coast of Scotland. It is about 2.5 square miles in area and has been uninhabited since 1912. The highest population was around 150 in the 1880's but dwindled after that until the island was abandoned in 1912.

This is well known among dulcimer players since the tune is simple to pick out on the dulcimer in both traditional and newer tuning setups.