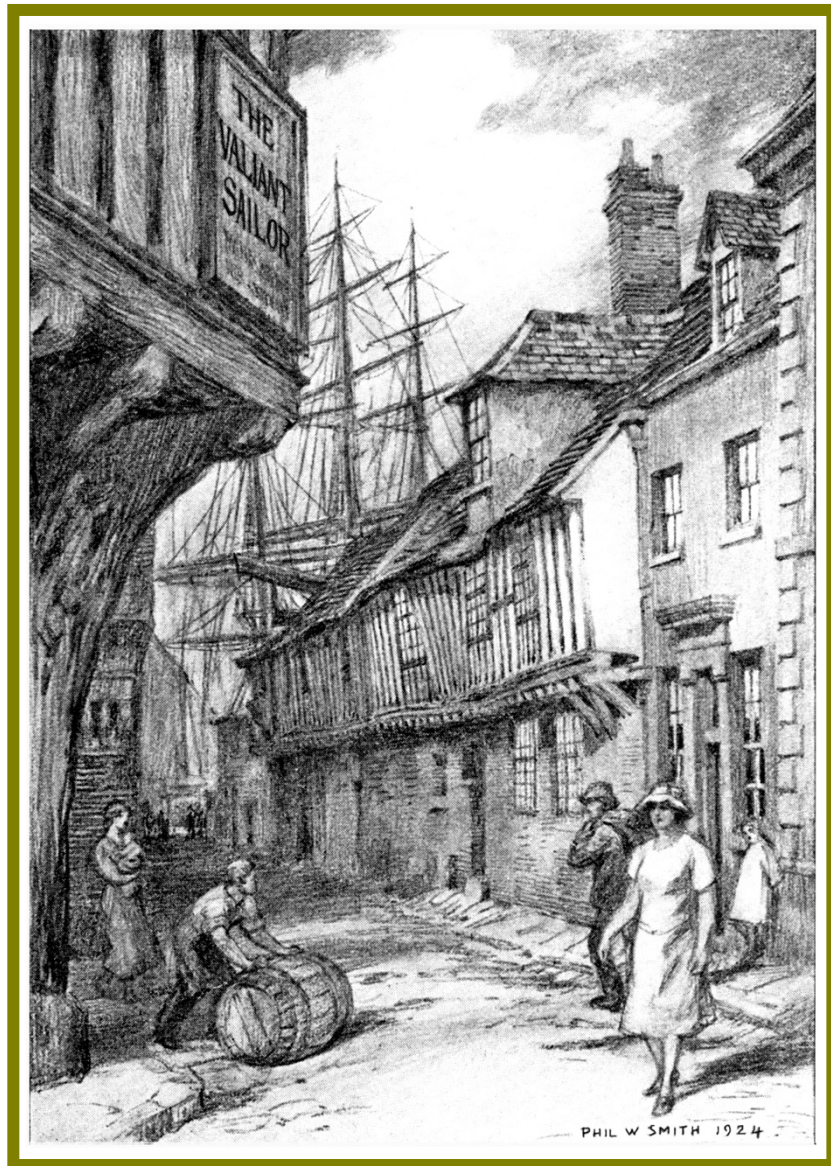


# SEA SONGS OF CICELY FOX SMITH



Edited by Charles Ipcar

# Sea Songs of Cicely Fox Smith

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Cicely Fox Smith, from **The Bookman**, p. 274;  
photograph by Emil Otto Hoppé

**Musical Notation by David Maxwell  
And Pam Weeks**

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A good faith effort has been made to acquire permission from the known artists, or their legal representatives, who created the from-the-period-illustrations used in this songbook. The primary artists include Anton Otto Fischer, Gordon Grant, Stan Hugill, Charles Pears, and Phil W. Smith.

## Preface

There are few poets who do so good a job of describing the world of the deep-water sailor in the Great Age of Sail as Cicely Fox Smith. Whether it's sailors outward bound, up aloft in a howling Cape Horn gale, cruising the gritty streets of sailortown, or remembering a long-lost love, Smith's verses resonate with the words and phrases of those old shellbacks. Many of her poems tell a compelling yarn or portray a world which has slipped away on the "wind of a dream."

This songbook is designed to provide ready access to many of the fine songs based on the nautical poems of Smith, poems adapted for singing and which have recently been recorded. To date over 100 poems have been so adapted, some with multiple renditions and alternative musical settings. The Discography in this songbook lists many of these recordings. The omission of any other recording only means that the editor has not been made aware of its existence; it is not a reflection on the quality of a particular recording.

As an editor who sings traditional and contemporary songs of the sea, I am primarily interested in Smith's nautical poems. But anyone who is interested in reviewing the entire collection of her known poems, some 660 poems at last count, in their original form may do so at their leisure at the Oldpoetry Website, [www.oldpoetry.com](http://www.oldpoetry.com). Anyone who would like to hear how I lead each song in this songbook may access the "list of lyrics page" from my website, or order one of my CDs as described on the inside back cover of this book.

There are various ways that different performers have adapted these poems for singing. Some strictly adhere to the original text. Others take great liberties and cut entire verses while adding new wording and even choruses. I believe that the adaptation process is a delicate compromise of maintaining as much of the original poem as possible while trying to fashion it into something that can be sung well to a general audience. I find that some poems are readily sung as composed while others require major surgery. You are the ultimate judge about how successful any musical rendition of a poem is.

Finally, I would like to thank my friend and colleague Jim Saville who is jointly responsible for posting many of Smith's original poems on the Oldpoetry Website, where we worked as forum moderators.



Bob Zentz, Danny & Joyce McLeod, and Charles Ipcar,  
Cicely Fox Smith Workshop, Mystic Sea Music Festival, 2008

## INTRODUCTION

Cicely Fox Smith was born February 1, 1882, into a middle-class family in Lymm, near Warrington, England, during the latter half of the reign of Queen Victoria. Her father was a barrister, and her grandfather was a clergyman. Smith might have been expected to have a brief education and then to settle down to life as a homemaker either for her family or her marriage partner. Thankfully that did not happen.



Cicely Fox Smith as a young girl, circa 1892.  
from National Maritime Museum Archives, Greenwich, UK.

She was well educated at Manchester High School for Girls from 1894 to 1897, where she described herself later as "something of a rebel," and started writing poems at a comparatively early age. In an article for the school magazine Smith wrote "I have a hazy recollection of epic poems after Pope's *Iliad*, romantic poems after Marmion stored carefully away in tin tobacco boxes when I was seven or eight." All that early work is lost unfortunately. She published her first book of verses when she was 17 and it received favorable press comments.





Wandering the moors near her home she developed a spirit of adventure. She would follow the Holcombe Harriers hunt on foot as a girl, no mean feat.<sup>1</sup> She had a fierce desire to travel to Africa but eventually settled for a voyage to Canada.

Smith sailed with her mother and sister Madge in 1911 on a steamship to Montreal, Canada. They then traveled by train to Lethbridge<sup>2</sup>, Alberta, and stayed for about a year with her older brother Richard Andrew Smith before they continued on to British Columbia (BC).<sup>3</sup> From 1912 to 1913 the three of them resided in the James Bay neighborhood of Victoria, 350 Semco Street<sup>4</sup>, at the southern tip of Vancouver Island. Cicely described herself working as a typist for the BC Lands Department and later for an attorney on the waterfront. Her spare time was spent roaming nearby wharves and alleys, talking to residents and sailors alike. She listened to and learned from the sailors' tales until she too was able to speak with that authoritative nautical air that pervades her written work.<sup>5</sup>



Victoria's Inner Harbour – 1899

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<sup>1</sup> **The Bookman**, p. 274

<sup>2</sup> **Later English Poems 1901-1922**, pp. 35-36

<sup>3</sup> **1911 British Census; Later English Poems 1901-1922**, pp. 35-36 and **1908 Passenger List (Montreal/Quebec)**

<sup>4</sup> **Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory**, 1913, on p. 799; she is listed as "writer" "r" (resident) at 350 Simcoe Street; her sister is noted on p. 802 as is her mother on p. 803.

<sup>5</sup> **Sailor Town Days**, p. 163-182; **Peregrine in Love** pp. 86-87; **A Book of Famous Ships**, p. 160

On November 23, 1913, Smith, together with her mother and sister, arrived home in Liverpool aboard the White Star Dominion Line steamer *Teutonic* on the eve of World War 1.<sup>6</sup> She and her family then settled in Holcombe Cottage, Boothroyden. The family then shifted to Bury, Lancashire, and after the end of World War 1 to Hampshire. Her final residence was in West Halse, Bow, Crediton, North Devon from about 1950 to 1954.



S. S. *Teutonic*, circa 1900

She soon put her experiences to use in a great outpouring of poetry, some of it clearly focused on supporting England's war efforts. Much of her poetry was from the point of view of the sailor. The detailed nautical content of her poems made it easy to understand why so many readers assumed that Smith was male. One correspondent wrote to her as "Capt. Fox Smith" and when she tried to correct him he wrote back "You say you are not a master but you must be a practical seaman. I can always detect the hand of an amateur."<sup>7</sup> He was almost correct. She was familiar with life at sea as few armchair amateurs would ever be. It was only when she was well established that she started routinely using the by-line "Miss C. Fox Smith" or "Cicely Fox Smith."

Smith initially had her poetry published in a wide variety of magazines and newspapers such as **Blackwood's Magazine**, **Blue Peter**, **Canada Monthly**, **Country Life**, **Cunard Magazine**, **Daily Chronicle**, **Grand Magazine**, **Holly Leaves**, **Outlook**, **Pall Mall Gazette**, **The Daily Mail**, **The Dolphin**, **The London Mercury**, **The Nautical Magazine**, **The Spectator**, **The Sphere**, **The Times Literary Supplement**, **Westminster Gazette**, **White Star Magazine**, **The Windsor Magazine**, **The Week** and **The Daily Colonist** (British Columbia), **The Register** (Australia), **Nelson Evening Mail** (New Zealand), and last but hardly least **Punch Magazine** for which she wrote many poems between 1914 and her death in 1954. She later re-published most of these poems in her poetry books. In all, she published some 660 poems.

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<sup>6</sup> **1913 Passenger Lists (Liverpool)**

<sup>7</sup> **Songs & Chanties**, p. 232

Other literary works by Smith included three romantic novels, numerous short stories and articles, as well as several books describing "sailortown." She also published a book of traditional sea shanties that she had collected, and she edited a collection of sea poems and stories primarily by other authors. In 1937 Smith finally realized a childhood dream by sailing around the coast of Africa, as a guest of the Union-Castle Mail Steamship Co. Ltd., stopping in the harbors along the way; she wrote of her experiences in **All the Way Round: Sea Roads to Africa**. In the 1940s she began writing children's sea stories with her sister Margaret (Madge) Scott Smith, other travel books, history books, a book about ship models, and contributed to and edited many other collections.

The fine art work of her brother Phil W. Smith of Portsmouth, known at the time for his etchings of Elizabethan architecture, illustrates several of her poetry and prose books.

Her literary outpourings were such as to persuade the Government to award her, at the age of 67, a modest pension for "her services to literature."

Smith kept writing to the end of her life about many things and many places but always with the accuracy and knowledge of an expert. She even chose her own gravestone epitaph, an extract from one of Walter Raleigh's poems:

*But from this earth  
This grave  
This dust  
My lord shall raise me up  
I trust*

Cicely Fox Smith died on April 8th, 1954, in the village of West Hasle Bow, Devon, where she'd been living with her sister.

Smith is gaining a wider audience once again as more and more musicians are putting her poems to music and producing many fine songs, primarily in the nautical folk song tradition. It is hoped that the present songbook will help further such interest in the work of this fine writer.

*I dreamed a dream in sailor town, a foolish dream and vain,  
Of ships and men departed, of old days come again —  
And an old song in sailor town, an old song to sing  
When shipmate meets with shipmate in the evening.*

Charles Ipcar and James Saville



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# The Songs



The *Veronica*, a three-masted barque, after dropping her tow



Adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar, ©2004  
Tune: after traditional *Blow the Candles Out*

## Outward Bound

Am G Am G Am C G Am G

Now we've paint-ed the Rat-cliff High-way red To the tune of twelve-month's pay - We've

Am G Am C G Am G Am

cruised a-round from the Ship A-ground To the shores of Ti-ger Bay; — We've

C G Am G

stood our pals and we've kissed the gals — For a fort-night and a day.

Am G Am C G Am G Am

Now we're out-ward bound from Sail-or-town, And it's time we're on our way!

For there's something wrong with the dance and song,  
And there ain't no bite in beer –  
So let's set sail for New South Wales,  
Any port, long's it's not here;  
*Baltic way, down the Bay,  
Up the China Seas;  
Pensacola, Palembang,  
Anywhere you please. (2X)*

You can get your sea-chest out of pawn,  
Or leave it where it lies –  
You can pay your shot, or maybe not,  
You can kiss your gal good-bye;  
With a "Now, me Dear, be of good cheer,  
We'll see you next pay day,"  
*For we're outward bound from Sailortown,  
And it's time we're on our way!*

So we'll warp her out with a song or shout,  
And give the tug a cheer –  
Then it's off we go to Callao,  
Any port, long's it's not here;  
*Baltic way, down the Bay,  
Up the China Seas;  
Pensacola, Palembang,  
Anywhere you please. (2X)*

**Notes:**

From **Full Sail: More Sea Songs and Ballads**, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Houghton Mifflin Co., NY, ©1926, pp. 69-71.

This is a classic sailortown poem where the sailors have "laid around and played around" too long and it's time to ship out.

This poem was first adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar in 2004, as recorded on **More Uncommon Sailor Songs**, ©2005.

The header graphic titled *Whorehouse District in a French Sea Port* is drawn by Stan Hugill, from his book **Sailortown**, published by E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, US, ©1967, p. 151.





Adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar, ©2006  
Tune: after traditional *I Know Where I'm Going*

## Shipmates (1914)

C G C

Good - bye and fare ye well, we'll sail no

F G C

more to - geth-er, Up and down the deep seas,

G C F G C

in fair or foul weath-er: We'll sail no

G C F C G

more to - geth-er, in foul weath-er or fine,

C G C F

And you'll go your way, and

C G F C G  
I'll go mine, And you'll go

C F C G C  
your way, and I'll go mine.

This world is very wide and there's never any knowing  
 The countries we'll be seeing or the ports where we'll be going;  
 Up and down the wide world, back across the line,  
 And you'll go your way, and I'll go mine,  
*And you'll go your way, and I'll go mine!*

Good-bye and fare ye well – but maybe we'll be meeting,  
 In some foreign city, where we'll shout each other greeting;  
 Back from deep sea roving, back from wind and weather –  
 You and me from cross the seas, two shipmates together,  
*You and me from cross the seas, two shipmates together!*

You'll blow up from Eastward, and I'll blow in from the West,  
 And of all the times we've ever had, it's then we'll have the best;  
 We'll raise a glass and sing our songs, and all things will be fine –  
 Then you'll go your way, and I'll go mine,  
*Then you'll go your way, and I'll go mine.*

So good-bye and fare ye well: may naught but good attend ye,  
 All around the wide world, where sailor's luck may send ye;  
 Up and down the deep seas, back across the Line –  
 And you'll go your way, and I'll go mine,  
*And you'll go your way, and I'll go mine!*

**Notes:**

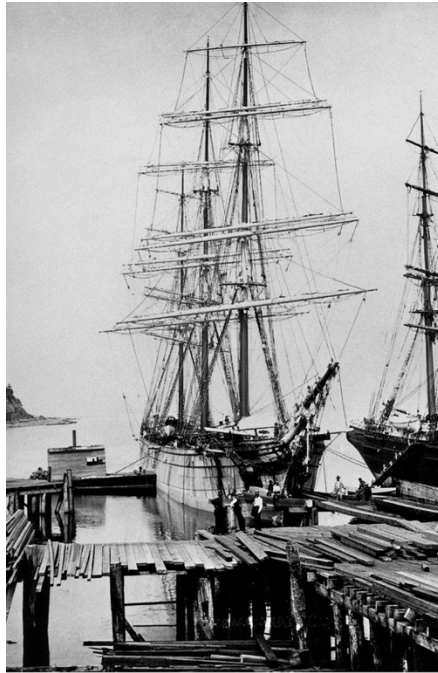
From **Songs and Chanties: 1914-1916**, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Elkin Mathews, London, UK, ©1919, pp. 25-26.

The theme of this poem seems quite contemporary, as good friends break up and venture out to far corners of the world. One wonders if this is a poem that Smith composed while parting from her sailor friend "Dan," whom she later described as having been lost at sea.

This poem was first adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar in 2006, as recorded on **Old Sailor-Poets**, ©2007.

The header graphic titled *Changing a Jib* is not of Smith but of another young woman Elisabeth Jacobsen who crewed aboard one of the last commercial grain ships, the four-masted barque *Parma* in 1933, photographed by Alan Villiers from his book **Last of the Wind Ships**, published by George Rutledge & Sons, London, UK, ©1935, p. 132.





Adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar, ©2005;  
Tune: after traditional *The Boys Won't Leave the Girls Alone*

## Lumber (Steveston, BC)

C F C G7 C

Now if I've got to choose a-lone\_\_\_ One of\_\_ all the freights I've known -

F C G7 C

All my car - goes live or dead,\_\_\_ Ba - con pigs or pigs of lead;\_\_\_

F C G7 C

Cat - tle, cop - ra, rice or rails, Pil - grims, cool - ies ni - trate, nails, Lim - a beans or

F C G7 C

Chin - a tea - what do you think my pick would be?

Loading lumber long ago  
In a ship I used to know,  
With the bow-ports open wide  
In her stained and rusted side,  
*And the saw blades screaming shrill  
At the Steveston lumber-mill;  
Where the Fraser floods and flows –  
Green and cold from melting snows.*

And the tow-boats' wailing din,  
As the booms come crawling in,  
Fills the echoing creeks with sound,  
And there's sawdust all around;  
*Deep and soft like drifting snow;*  
*Nowhere much a man can go,*  
*Nothing much to see or do –*  
*Mouldiest burg you ever knew.*

But I'd give the years between –  
All I've done and all I've seen,  
All the fooling and the fun,  
All the chances lost or won;  
*Near and far, by shore and sea,*  
*I would give them all to be,*  
*Loading lumber long ago –*  
*With the lads I used to know!*

Loading lumber at the mill  
Till the screaming saws were still,  
And the rose-red sunset died  
From the mountains to the tide;  
*And the night brought out its stars,*  
*And the wind song in the spars,*  
*Of that ship I used to know –*  
*Loading lumber, long ago!*

**Reprise:**

*Cattle, copra, rice or rails,*  
*Pilgrims, coolies, nitrate, nails,*  
*Lima beans or China tea –*  
*What do you think my pick would be?*

**Notes:**

From **Rovings: Sea Songs and Ballads**, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Elkin Mathews, London, UK, ©1921, p.p. 33-34. First published in **Punch Magazine**, Volume 160, January 12, 1921, p. 30.

The poet was based in Victoria, BC, from 1912 to 1913. She described in vivid detail walking the docks, watching the sunsets, admiring the sailing ships, listening to the yarns of the ship-keepers and other sailors, and nosing around the waterfront. The Village of Steveston is located in Richmond, next to Vancouver where she also likely visited.

This poem was first adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar as recorded on **More Uncommon Sailor Songs**, ©2005.

The header graphic is a photograph of lumber being loaded into a ship with her "bow-ports open wide" at the Chemainus docks on Vancouver Island, from the collection of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.



Adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar, ©2004  
Tune: after Jon Campbell's *The Mary* ©1992

## Port o' Dreams

D G C G D

"Now there's man-y ports," said Mur-phy, "and I guess I've sampled

G D G C D D7

most, Round a - bout the Gulf of Guin-ea, up and down the Chil-e coast, The

G C G D7 G C

Black Sea and the Bal - tic, and the Chin-a seas I've seen, The North Sea and the

D D7 D

South Sea, and the plac-es in be - tween. But the ports as look the fin -

D7 C G D D7

- est turn out some-how worst of all, For I lost my chum in Ri-o, in a

C D G C G D

Da - go danc - in' hall, And I lost my bloom - in' heart once, to a wench in Cal-la -

G C D D7

o, And I lost my youth in Fris - co, so man - y years — a - go.

But there's one I've never sighted, out of all the ports there be;  
 It's a place a feller talked of as was shipmates once with me,  
 On the hooker *Maid of Athens*, she was one of Dunc Macneill's,  
 She's gone missin' many a year now, out of Steveston home with deals;  
 And this feller said the drinks there are the best a man could find,  
 And a sailor's always welcome, and the girls are always kind;  
 There's dancin' and there's singin' and there's every sort of fun,  
 On the plaza in the evening when the lazy sun is done.

And the blessed old Pacific, keeps singin' like a psalm,  
 To the ships out in the roadstead, and the firefly in the palm,  
 And the days are never scorchin', and the nights are never hot,  
 In that port he used to yarn of, with the name I've clean forgot!  
 So I'll never fetch that harbour, but it's maybe for the best,  
 For I daresay if I found it, it'd be like all the rest;  
 Still I'd like to think it's out there, waitin' just for me,  
 With the red wine and the white wine, the dancin' and the spree.

**D-----D7-----C-----G**  
 Still I'd like to think it's waitin', waitin' just for me,  
**-----D-----D7-----C-----D**  
 With the red wine and the white wine, the dancin' and the spree;  
**----G-----C-G-----D-G**  
 And a table by the quayside, a good gal for my knee,  
**-----C-----D-----D7**  
 With the firefly gleamin' golden, in those palms I'll never see!"

**Notes:**

From **Sea Songs and Ballads 1917-22**, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Houghton Mifflin Co., NY, ©1924, pp. 32-33. First published in **Punch Magazine**, Volume 163, August 16, 1922, p. 163.

I love the pursuit of the romantic dream as told by this old salt, the recognition that the dream is an unlikely reality, but what the hell, it's still fun to muse on!

The reference to "Dago" is a little hard to take for contemporary listeners but it's an accurate representation of how sailors derisively referred to residents of South America; consider your audience before using the term or substitute something like "rowdy dancing hall."

"Deals" are rough utility grade planks.

This poem was first adapted for singing by Danny and Joyce McLeod (UK), as recorded on **No Cross Words**, ©2002. Another musical setting for this poem was later made by Charles Ipcar as recorded on **Uncommon Sailor Songs**, ©2004.

The header graphic is an illustration by Charles Pears from **Salt-Water Poems and Ballads**, by John Masefield, published by The Macmillan Co., New York, US, ©1914, facing p. 58.



Adapted for singing by Peter Massey, ©2005  
 Words further modified by Charles Ipcar, 2006

## The Long Road Home

D7      Em      G      D

There's a wind and it's a - sigh - ing, a - long the wa - ter -

Em      G      Am

side, We're home - ward bound at last, on to - night's full tide; A -

Em

round the world — and back a - gain — is ver - y far — to

C      G      D      Em

roam — From San Juan Strait to En - gland, it's a long road

C      G      D      Em

home! From San Juan Strait to En - gland, it's a long road

C      D7

home!

We'll tow out to Flattery before the sun is high;  
We'll shake the harbour dust away, bid the land good-bye;  
And singing in her tops'ls, the deep-sea wind will moan –  
And lift us through it lively on the long road home.  
*And lift us through it lively on the long road home.*

The Old Man he goes smiling, he's gathered in a crew:  
We've various Turks and infidels, we've even got a Jew;  
We've got the pick of all the stiffs from Panama to Nome,  
And we'll make them into sailors on the long road home.  
*And we'll make them into sailors on the long road home.*

We've waited for the cargo, we've waited for the crew,  
We've waited for the tide, and now the waiting's through;  
Oh don't you hear the deep-sea wind, smell the deep-sea foam?  
We'll be rolling gun'le-under on the long road home.  
*We'll be rolling gun'le-under on the long road home.*

And it's "Home, boys, home" when the anchor rattles down,  
In the reek of good old Mersey fog, rolling rich and brown:  
Around the world and back again is very far to roam –  
From San Juan Strait to England, it's a long road home!  
*From San Juan Strait to England, it's a long road home!*  
*From San Juan Strait to England, it's a long road home!*

#### Notes:

From **Songs and Chanties: 1914-1916**, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Elkin Mathews, London, UK, ©1919, pp. 31-32. First published in **The Daily Colonist**, Victoria, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, December 17, 1912, p. 8.

This poem anticipates the poet leaving Victoria, British Columbia, in 1913 after a stay of almost two years. Instead of sailing around Cape Horn, Cicely and her family took the train east to Montreal and then boarded the steamer for home. This poem seems to form a set with *Pacific Coast* and *The Ship's Good-bye*.

"San Juan Strait" is an abbreviated reference to the Strait of San Juan de Fuca in the Pacific Northwest.

Peter Massey (UK) first adapted this poem for singing, as recorded on **The Long Road Home**, ©2005; this song was later recorded with lyrics shortened by Charles Ipcar on **Old Sailor-Poets**, ©2007, using Massey's musical setting; it was later recorded by Roll & Go on **Look Out**, ©2010.

The header graphic is a photograph by Hugh Frith, taken of the four-masted barque *Pamir* in 1946 after slipping her tow off Cape Flattery, British Columbia, Canada, from the collection of the Vancouver Maritime Museum.





Adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar, ©2015  
Tune by Charles Ipcar, ©2015

## The Chanteyman

D Bm G D

Now I heard the wind a - call - ing — Call - ing from the sea; — It was

5 Bm G A D

like an old friend sing - ing — a song well known to me; To the tune the creak - ing

10 Bm G D Bm

blocks make, when the run - ning lines do strain. — Chant - ey - man, oh chant - ey - man,

15 G D D Bm G

sing your songs a - gain! Chant - ey - man, oh, chant - ey - man, sing your songs a -

20 D Bm G A

gain! — Sing out long for all that's gone, all — the ships and men; You can

25 D Bm G D

sail the high seas o - ver, from shore to far - thest shore; — Meet with ships a -

30 Bm G D

plen - ty, — but her like — you'll find no more. —

Then I heard the yard mast-headed with a "Rollin' Rio Grande,"  
While beating up 'gainst them Westerlies with every rag she'd stand;  
I heard them Cape Horn greybeards go chargin' on their way,  
And I saw big Northers sweepin' down Valparaiso Bay. (CHO)

I heard it as an echo, from other times than these,  
The tramping cursing watches, the roaring rolling seas;  
The shrill wind round us shrieking, the cracking volleying sail,  
And the tatters of our voices flying o'r a Cape Horn gale. (CHO)

Then I heard the pumps a-clanking, all bitter night and day,  
While rolling lee rail under, like a half-tide rock she lay;  
And I heard the old man swearing, "Sing some other song!"  
For we drove him stamping crazy raising "Old Stormalong." (CHO)

So now she's gone with all aboard, gone with the lads I knew;  
She's gone beyond all knowing, as ships and sailors do;  
And there's nothing but a dream left, of the days we used to know;  
She's gone but not forgotten -- was it all so long ago? (CHO)

#### Notes:

Transcribed at the Imperial War Museum, London, UK, from **The China Sea and Other Poems**, a hand-written manuscript by Cicely Fox Smith.

In Verse 4 the reference to the Old Man swearing as the crew sings the shanty *Old Stormalong* is further explained in **A Book of Shanties**, a collection of traditional shanties by Cicely Fox Smith, p. 62, where she says:

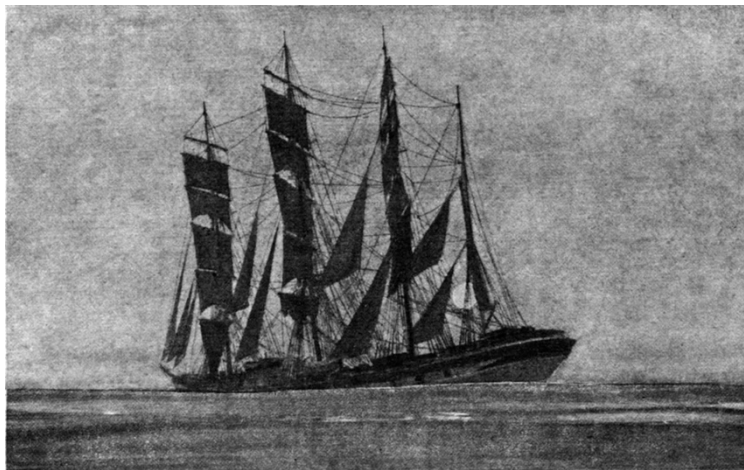
"A man once told me how he heard *Old Stormy* actually sung as a pumping shanty, in one of De Wolf's Liverpool ships, the *Blythswood*, when she had been dismasted in the Pacific and had to be pumped into port. Someone started up *Stormalong*. Out came the Old Man from his cabin foaming at the mouth. 'Stop that darned dirge! He sang out. 'If you can't do without singing, for the love of Mike sing something cheerful!'"

First adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar as recorded on **Never Turn a Blind Eye to the Storm**, ©2015.

The header graphic of an old sailor out at the end of the yardarm during a gale is from **Yankees Under Sail**, edited by Richard Heckman, published by Yankee Books, Dublin, New Hampshire, US, ©1986, p. 177, artist unknown.

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Drawn by Charles Pears from **Salt-Water Poems and Ballads**, by John Masefield,  
published by The Macmillan Co., New York, US, ©1921, facing p. 90.

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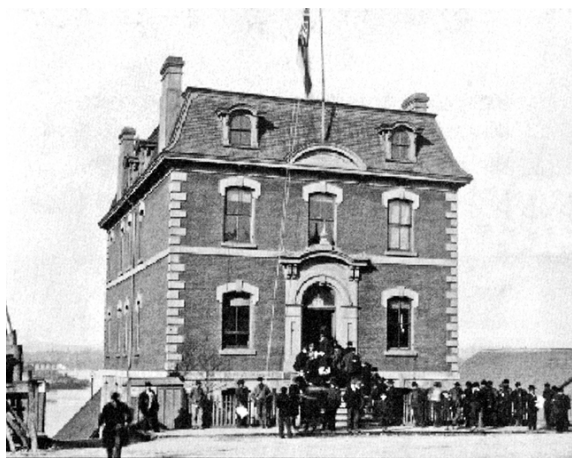
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*The nautical poems of Cicely Fox Smith earned her by the 1920s a reputation comparable to Rudyard Kipling and John Masefield. Few poets have so successfully described the last years of the Great Age of Sail from the point of view of the deep-water sailor. And yet her works gradually faded from view, only to be rediscovered by folk singers beginning in 1989 and transformed into compelling songs.*

This songbook demonstrates how some of Smith's nautical poems have been successfully adapted for singing. Included are lyrics, musical notation, chords, and notes for each song. There are also references to most of the recordings that have been made of the included poems, as well as recordings of many of her other poems. In all over 100 poems have been set to music, with 30 included in this songbook.

It is hoped that this songbook will help to restore Smith's reputation as one of the best nautical poets of the 20th century.



The Old Customs House in  
Victoria, British Columbia, 1874

**Published by Ipcar Productions,  
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The author during research in  
Victoria, British Columbia, 2005

Charles Ipcar is a singer of traditional and contemporary sea music who has toured from coast to coast in the States as well as in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Ipcar has also been featured as a solo performer and workshop leader at the prestigious Mystic Sea Music Festival in Connecticut, and has performed with his band Roll & Go at that same Festival.

Ipcar is professionally trained as an Urban Geographer, with a Ph.D. from Michigan State University. He has also taught geography as a Peace Corps volunteer in the secondary schools of Ethiopia.

Ipcar's interest in the nautical poems of Cicely Fox Smith was triggered by a concert featuring Danny and Joyce McLeod in 2000. Since then he and his co-editor James Saville from the United Kingdom have republished 660 of Smith's poems in *The Complete Poetry of Cicely Fox Smith*. Ipcar has also adapted poems for singing by John Masefield, Burt Franklin Jenness, William McFee, Edwin J. Brady, and Harry Kemp.

He resides with his wife Judy, along with their calico cat Chelsea Girl, in the Kennebec River town of Richmond, Maine.