



**Bristol
Sings
Music**

Sea Songs and Shanties Pack

By Carolyn Robson

The Full English

The Full English is a unique nationwide project unlocking hidden treasures of England's cultural heritage by making over 58,000 original source documents from 12 major folk collectors available to the world via a ground-breaking nationwide digital archive and learning project. The project is led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and in partnership with Bristol Plays Music and other cultural partners across England.

The Full English digital archive has thousands of traditional folk songs that were collected from across the country. Some of these songs are known widely, others have lain dormant in notebooks and files within archives for decades. This Bristol Folk Song pack gives schools across Bristol the chance to bring them back to life and give them a new voice in the 21st century! **Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Folk Music Fund and The Folklore Society.**

Bristol Sings Music

Bristol Sings Music is the singing strategy for Bristol Plays Music. It aims to enable all children and young people in our schools to access opportunities to sing, and to develop their skills, knowledge and repertoire to maintain provision in the coming years.

Led by Welsh National Opera, Bristol Sings Music also involves Bristol Plays Music, St George's Bristol, Sing Up, South West Music School, Drake Music, Making Music, Bristol Choral Society and Bristol Schools' Music Society. The Partnership is passionate about singing in Bristol, bringing together good practice and join up the singing sector.

Leading on the project for Welsh National Opera is project manager Laurie Stewart. Laurie has working in the field of music education for many years and was formally Sing Up Area Leader for Bristol. She is also a classically trained singer, studying at the Royal College of Music (BMus Hons) and The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (MMus).

Warm Up

Warm up with the song *My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*; learn the song then play this game:

- (i) Sitting on chairs in a circle stand or sit on all the words beginning with the letter 'b' (starts and ends sitting.)
- (ii) Next while sitting down in a circle, clap on all the words that contain an 'o'.
- (iii) Finally stand or sit on words beginning with 'b' and clap on words containing an 'o' at the same time.

My Bonnie lies over the ocean

My Bonnie lies over the sea

My Bonnie lies over the ocean

O bring back my Bonnie to me

Bring back, bring back

O bring back my Bonnie to me, to me

Bring back, bring back

O bring back my Bonnie to me

Songs

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| • Yeave Ho | Pulling shanty |
| • The Bold Pirate | Sea song |
| • Times are Hard | Shanty |
| • A Long Time Ago | Pulling shanty |
| • Tis of a Gallant Southerner | Sea song |
| • A Roving | Shanty |

Shanties

Many of the songs in this pack are shanties. A shanty is a work song that was sung by the sailors on large merchant sailing ships to keep them in time when hauling on ropes or pulling oars etc. The songs had different rhythms and were improvised (adapted and made up) to be longer or shorter as needed. They were call and response songs performed by a soloist who sang a line and the rest of the crew who responded in chorus. The soloist was called the shantyman and he would have had a strong voice.

The songs were unaccompanied and mostly sung in English though many have been translated into other European languages. By the end of the 19th century ships became powered by steam and machines replaced manpower so fewer sailors were required to do the same tasks of hauling on ropes etc.

The first song in the pack is **Yeave Ho** an exclamation used by sailors when pulling on ropes.



Yeave Ho

Sung by Miss Dobbyn and her brother, collected by Cecil Sharp
at 85a Redland Road, Bristol, July 13 1914
www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/3009

Roud Number: 13257
trad.arr. Carolyn Robson

Tune

Come all you young sail or boys Yeave Ho Yeave Ho Draw your sterns to our an-chor and

Harmony1

Yeave Ho Yeave Ho

Harmony2

list-en un - to me For I'm going to make bold to Yeave Ho Yeave Ho Spin you a sail-or's

list-en un - to me Yeave Ho Yeave Ho

15

yarn all a - bout the deep blue sea. Sing ing Yeave Ho Ho Hi Ho Sing ing Yeave Ho Ho Hi!

bout the deep blue sea. Yeave Ho Ho Hi Ho Yeave Ho Ho Hi!

Come all you young sailor boys
Yeave Ho Yeave Ho
Draw your stems to our anchor and listen unto me
For I'm going to make bold to
Yeave Ho Yeave Ho
Spin you a sailor's yarn all about the deep blue sea
Singing Yeave Ho Ho Hi Ho
Singing Yeave Ho Ho Hi!

Now our captain had a daughter
Yeave Ho Yeave Ho
And her name was Eliza with beautiful blue eyes
And in school they had taught her
Yeave Ho Yeave Ho
For to play on the piano and singing likewise
Singing Yeave Ho Ho Hi Ho
Singing Yeave Ho Ho Hi!

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The Bold Pirate

Collected from Joseph Elliott by HED Hammond

Todber, Dorset, Sept 1905

www.vwml.org/record/HAM/2/8/26

Roud Number: 984

trad. arr. Carolyn Robson

Tune

'Twas on the 12th of March, my boys, from Brist ol_ we set sail The_ wind it was____

Harmony

The bold pir - - ate The

Drum

7

west north west it blew a pleas - ant_ gale We_ sail - ed all the live-long day till

bold pir - - ate The bold

12

night was com-ing on And then we found a bold pir-ate sailing two foot to our one.

pir - ate Then we found a bold pir - ate.

'Twas on the 12th of March, my boys, from Bristol we set sail
The wind it was west north west it blew a pleasant gale
We sailed all the livelong day till night was coming on
And then we found a bold pirate sailing two foot to our one

He hailed us in English he asked us whence we came
We told him from (old) Bristol town and on our course was bound
Lower down your fore and main top sails, let your ship lie to
And if you fire one shot at all (every man on board shall die)
[alternative last line: Or every man you have on board this day shall walk the plank]

Then up spake our commander bold "I hope that ne'er will be
When we have 28 brass guns to bear us company
And we have got 300 men most British seamen bold
That values more their honour than misers do their gold."

The bold pirate called his hands all aft, and told 'em what betide
Saying "You hear they got 28 brass guns and we have forty (five)
And we have got 500 men and they have got but three
And if then we are taken all hanged we shall be."

Note: The words in brackets have been added by Carolyn Robson to aid scanning
There are lots more verses online.

The Full English: www.vwml.org
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The Bold Pirate

Music link

Learn the song 'The Bold Pirate'; when you know the song form a boat shape with everyone in the class. At the front of the boat sits a drummer who beats the following rhythm; | z | | | | z | | | etc. to the words Bold Pir-ate. Everyone rows the boat leaning forward on the first beat of each bar (on Bold) then pulling back the oars (on Pirate).

Literacy link

Treasure Island (by Robert Louis Stevenson) and *Robinson Crusoe* (by Daniel Defoe) and *Swiss Family Robinson* (by Johann David Wyss) are all books about shipwrecks and/or being marooned on an island. Find out about the storyline of these books. Write a story or diary of someone who is shipwrecked on a desert island. Consider the following;

- (i) Describe a shipwreck or mutiny or capture by pirates
- (ii) Describe the island in detail e.g. how big is it? Is it inhabited? Is there animal life? Are there trees and plants? Is it a volcano? Did you salvage anything from the shipwreck or was anything washed ashore?
- (iii) How will you survive?
- (iv) Are you rescued and how?
- (v) Is there hidden treasure on your island? If so, draw a treasure map with coordinates.
- (vi) Discuss; are there any pirates today?

Ref: Talk like a pirate day – 19 Sept [<http://talklikeapirate.com/teachers.html>]

Art and Design link

Draw a picture of a pirate e.g. Long John Silver or Captain Jack Sparrow or of Robinson Crusoe and Friday to illustrate your story; or draw a comic strip to tell the story in pictures

Geography link

- (i) How do you know which way you're going on a ship?
- (ii) What are the different types of winds and gales? E.g.

[<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/marine/guide/beaufortscale.html>]

Music & Design link

In groups of 5 or 6 design a musical board game called **Treasure Island**.

Consider the following;

- (i) Map out your island design on an A4 sheet of paper.
- (ii) Draw a grid and number the squares as on a snakes and ladders board
- (iii) Put in interesting features such as trees, lakes, volcanos, animals, swamps, quicksand, mountains or hills, jungle areas, caves and coves.
- (iv) Name some of these geographical features e.g. Shark Bay, Dead Man's Cove, Hangman's Tree etc.
- (v) might like to make your own character counters to move on the board.
- (vi) Each group would represent a different square on the board.
Throwing a die (singular of dice) move a counter to land on a square, which could read '*monkeys in trees throw coconuts at you*'.

Make falling coconut sounds using woodblock and claves; make

monkey noises with your voice. Another square in the sea area surrounding the island might read '*Caught in sea storm*'; **use rain makers and clashing cymbals for crashing waves and your voices for the wind (ssshhh!) to represent the storm at sea'.**

History link

- (i) Where did ships from Bristol sail to and from?
- (ii) What cargoes came in and left Bristol?
- (iii) What would you want to do if you came back to Bristol after sailing on the sea for a long time? – what would you miss most? – write verses about it.



The Times Are Hard

Collected from Mr Stileman by Cecil Sharp, Bristol, 14 July 1914

www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/3013

Roud Number: 8234

trad.arr. Carolyn Robson

Tune

The times are hard and the wag - es low O leave her John - nie leave her O the

Harmony1

O the

Harmony2

The times are hard O leave her John - nie leave her O the

6

times are hard and the wag-es low It's time for us to leave her.

times are hard and the wag-es low It's time for us to leave her.

times are hard and the wag - es low It's time for us to leave her.

The times are hard and the wages low
O leave her Johnnie leave her
O the times are hard and the wages low
It's time for us to leave her

Extra verses from a version of the chanty collected in St Ives, Cornwall

O a leaking ship with a harping* crew

Our mate he is a bully man

He gives all the best he can

** harping means a crew with heaps of energy and desire to work*

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**Harping means a crew with heaps of energy and desire to work*

The Times Are Hard

'Sea Life in Nelson's time' by John Masefield

Our naval glory was built up by the blood and agony of thousands of barbarously maltreated men. It cannot be too strongly insisted on that sea life, in the late eighteenth century, in our navy, was brutalising, cruel, and horrible.There was barbarous discipline, bad pay, bad food, bad hours of work, bad company, bad prospects. ... The pay was bad at the best of times, but by the time it reached the sailor it had often shrunk to a half or a third of the original sum. (But) it was the long, monotonous imprisonment aboard which made the hateful life so intolerable.

Music link (1)

Learn the song 'Roll the Old Chariot Along' and make up your own verses about what you would miss if you were at sea on a large sailing vessel for months or years at a time. Form the shape of a boat and imagine you are slaves rowing for hours each day:

Roll the old chariot along

We'll roll the old chariot along

We'll roll the old chariot along

And we'll all hang on behind

- (i) You have been eating stale bread and biscuits and meat that has decayed. What might you dream of eating? e.g.

Some pizza and chips wouldn't do us any harm

Some pizza and chips wouldn't do us any harm

Some pizza and chips wouldn't do us any harm

And we'll all hang on behind.

- (ii) The water is warm and has dead flies floating in it.
 - What might you dream of drinking?
- (iii) You sleep on the hard wooden floor of the ship.
 - Where might you dream of sleeping? Etc.

Music link (2)

Learn the song 'The Times are Hard' and the harmonies too. Only one verse was collected. Read the passage from 'Sea Life in Nelson's Times' by John Masfield;

- (i) make up other verses which is just one line for each verse
- (ii) encourage individuals to sing solo on the first line then everyone join in on 'O leave her Johnnie leave her' and 'It's time for us to leave her' which is the refrain on each verse.
- (iii) Using C and F chime bars add an accompaniment especially on the refrain e.g. Leave her John- nie leave her

C C C C F F

- (iv) Read the section on shanties and try making up your own shanty in groups then add actions

History link

- (i) What reasons would make you leave home and family in the 18th century?
- (ii) Discuss the hardship and poverty of people working on the land in 18th century England; the propaganda used to entice men to fight for their country;
- (iii) What were the press gangs?
- (iv) Design a poster to encourage men to sign up for service on board ship
- (v) This song was collected from Mr Stileman in Bristol in 1914, 100 years ago. What was going on at that time? Would Mr Stileman have been asked to go and fight for his country?

A Long Time Ago Pulling Chanty

Collected from James Tucker (69 years old) by Cecil Sharp,
at Merchant Venturers Alms Houses, Bristol, 14 July 1914
www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/3014

Roud Number: 318
trad. arr. Carolyn Robson

Tune

A - way down south where I was born To my way ay day A -

Harmony

6

way down south where I was born a long time a go 'Twas a

10

long long time and a ve - ry long time A long time a go.

Away down south where I was born
To my way ay day
Away down south where I was born
A long time ago
'Twas a long long time ago and a very long time ago.

Early on a summer's morn
To my way ay day
Early on a summer's morn
A long time ago
'Twas a long long time and a very long time ago.

I made up my mind to go to sea
To my way ay day
I made up my mind to go to sea
A long time ago
'Twas a long long time and a very long time ago.

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Early on a summer's morn
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A long time ago
'Twas a long long time and a very long time ago.

I made up my mind to go to sea
To my way ay day
I made up my mind to go to sea
A long time ago
'Twas a long long time and a very long time ago.

A Long Time Ago

This song is a 'Pulling Shanty', like the song Yeave Ho, which was an exclamation used by sailors when pulling on ropes to synchronize a steady pace of work such as winding the capstan.

Music link

Learn the song and harmonies of 'A Long Time Ago'

- (i) Write some other verses, changing the first line of each verse only.
- (ii) Add a drum accompaniment e.g. on the first beat of each bar to keep the shantymen in time to pull on the ropes
- (iii) Discuss the daily routine of the sailor and what other types of jobs pulling shanties have been used for; work out a drama sequence to represent life and work on board a naval or merchant in the 18th century and enact it to illustrate the song
- (iv) In the past the songs were sung and handed down aurally or written on broadsheets. How might you record a song now?

History link

- (i) Many songs in the past were collected from people in workhouses; find out about the workhouse (ref: Oliver Twist) Where might you go to collect songs today?

The Alms House on Kings Street in Bristol (see photo overleaf) was built in 1696 by the Society of Merchant Venturers for convalescent and old sailors to live in. The Society still exists and supports charity and educational work in Bristol. It was designated by English Heritage as a Grade 2 listed building.



The Alms Houses have a plaque on wall of building which reads:

***Freed from all storms the tempest and the rage
Of billows, here we spend our age.
Our weather beaten vessels here repair
And from the Merchants' kind and generous care
Find harbour here; no more we put to sea
Until we launch into Eternity.
And lest our Widows whom we leave behind
Should want relief, they too a shelter find.
Thus all our anxious cares and sorrows cease
Whilst our kind Guardians turn our toils to ease.
May they be with an endless Sabbath blest
Who have afforded unto us this rest."***

-
- (ii) Imagine you are a reporter and go to interview an elderly gentleman who served on board a ship in the 18th century. Write up the interview as a newspaper article. Find out about the following: discipline and punishment (cat o' nine tails); food and living accommodation on board; working conditions; illness (lime juice given to help prevent scurvy) and injury; pay; leave to go ashore etc.
 - (iii) Write a letter home of a young boy who ran away to sea
 - (iv) Write a diary of a sea captain and perhaps floggings that he had to carry out, or a battle at sea etc.



'Tis of a Gallant Southerner (Fo'castle song)

Collected from James Tucker by Cecil Sharp, Bristol, 14 July 1914

www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/3018

Roud Number: 625
trad. arr. Carolyn Robson

Tune

Harmony

8

13

Tis of a gall-ant south-ern-er that flew the stars and bars. The whist-ling wind from west north west blew
through his pitch-bone spars. With both the star-board tacks on board He flew be-fore the
gale. One aut-umn night when he rose the light on the head of old Kins-ale.

Tis of a gallant southerner that flew the stars and bars
The whistling wind from west north west blew through his pitchpine spars
With both the starboard tacks on board he flew before the gale
One autumn night when he rose the light on the head of old Kinsale

No thoughts of shortening was there by him who walked the poop
While neath the weight of his ponderous jib, the boom bent like a hoop
The groaning chest trees has told the strain that hung as his stout chain tack
But he only laughed as he lewked aloft at his bright and glittering track

What hangs out on our weather bow what hangs out on our lee
What hangs out on our weather bow abreast of the Saltees
But at the break of morn by her talk and tapering spars
We knew our morning visitor was a limejuice man o' war

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'Tis of a Gallant Southerner

This song is not a shanty but a sea song about a sea captain and his ship.

Music link

Learn the song and the harmony line.

- (i) The tune is a jig in 6/8 time. Make up a simple rhythm pattern to accompany the song using claves or a tambour e.g.

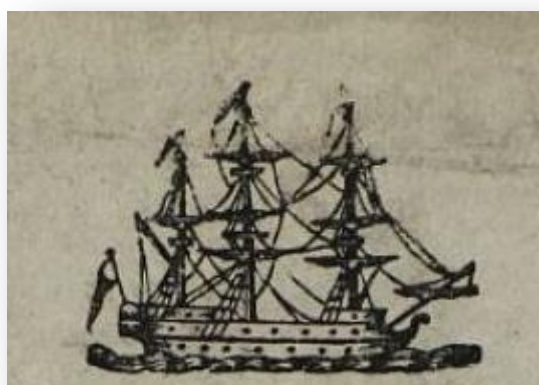
ta ti | ta ti | ta ti | ta ti | etc.
1 2 3 | 1 2 3 | 1 2 3 | 1 2 3 |

- (ii) Make up a simple country dance to go with the song e.g
- 1 In two rows of 4 couples facing your partner, top couple gallops down the middle of the set for 8 gallops and back up to top
 - 2 Then top couple casts at the top i.e. they divide so that each top person goes down behind their own line to meet at the bottom and everyone follows their own line; top couple forms an arch at the bottom of the set. Everyone meets their partner and comes up through the arch to start all over again with a new top couple galloping down the middle of the set at the start of the next verse.

History link

This is a good song to learn the different parts of ships.

- (i) Find out where the following parts of a ship are and what they would be used for. Describe them in your own words e.g. Fo'castle: upper deck of a sailing ship forward of foremast.
 - a. Fo'castle (fo'c'sle)
 - b. Poop
 - c. Jib
 - d. Boom
 - e. Chain tack
 - f. Spars
 - g. Starboard and port
- (ii) Find out about different types of different ships: e.g. man'o'war; merchant sailing vessels; wind-driven packet and clippers ships; steam-powered ships etc.
- (iii) What types of wood were ships made from and where did the wood come from e.g. pitchpine, and groaning chest trees



Geography link

Old Head of Kinsale is a lighthouse in County Cork, Ireland. The Saltees (Great and Little Saltee) are 5 kilometres off the southern coast of county Wexford, Ireland. Today they are one of the world's largest bird sanctuaries.

- (i) Look at a map of Ireland. Ireland is an island off the west coast of England. The total island of Ireland has 32 counties; 26 are in the Republic of Ireland and the remaining 6 are in the North of Ireland. Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom, and the remaining 26 counties make up the Republic of Ireland that is a sovereign state. The capital of the Republic of Ireland is Dublin. Draw its flag.
- (ii) Draw a map of Ireland and mark where the Saltees are and Old Kinsale lighthouse just off the coast of Wexford. Also mark where Dublin is.
- (iii) Today the Saltees are a bird sanctuary with 220 species of birds breeding on them including gannets, puffins, guillemots and razorbills . Draw one of the birds that you might find breeding on the Saltees.



A-Roving

Mr Stileman, Bristol, 14 July 1914
www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/3012

Roud Number: 649
trad.arr. Carolyn Robson

Tune

Harmony

8

15

I thought I heard the old man say I thought I heard him say I thought I heard that old man say We

leave the dock this ver - y day I'll go no more a - rov - ing with you fair maid. A rov - ing A

rov - ing for roving's been my ru - i - n I'll go no more a - rov - ing with you fair maid

I thought I heard the old man say
I thought I heard him say
I thought I heard that old man say
We leave the dock this very day

I'll go no more a-roving with you fair maid
A roving a roving for roving's been my ru-i-n
I'll go no more a roving with you fair maid

I took her hand within my own
And this I did say
I took her hand within my own
And said I'm bound to my old home

I'll go no more a roving with you fair maid
A roving a roving for roving's been my ru-i-n
I'll go no more a roving with you fair maid

A-Roving

Mr Stileman, Bristol, 14 July 1914
Roud Number: 649
www.wvml.org/record/CJS2/10/3012

I thought I heard the old man say
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I'll go no more a roving with you fair maid

Carolyn Robson

Carolyn is a professional singer and musician specialising in traditional folk song and dance. Her extensive repertoire consists mainly of songs from her native Northumberland and Scotland as well as from other parts of the British Isles. Carolyn is also a qualified teacher and has taught at schools in England, Scotland and Wales. She has been a consultant for a BBC TV Folk Dance series for schools, and until 1996 she was the Education Officer for the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Carolyn directs several community choirs and runs workshops at festival and events across the country. www.carolynrobson.com

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Edited by: Frances Watt

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