

Wooden Walls & Iron Men

The Prize

Yonder ships a privateer,
With men and guns a plenty.
What say you my brave men-
Shall we take this enemy?
Reduce all sail! Run out the guns!
Put one across her bow!
Yonder ship will be our prize,
Before the quarter hour.

Copyright Michael Aye

Duty

They sanded down the decks;
The guns were all run out.
"Let's give them what for lads!"
They heard the Cap'n shout.
The talk of duty and honour,
Meant little to the crew.
They fought for their mates,
And perhaps a prize or two.

Copyright Michael Aye

Battle Fatigue

I take a breath and look around me,
I'm grateful to be alive.
The guns, they're all silent now,
But, the smoke still burns my eyes.
There's a heaviness within me,
It takes a heavy toll.
It burns like rum going down,
To an empty, aching soul.

Copyright Michael Aye

The Watch (HMS SeaWolf)

The officer of the deck,
Peered thru a blinding snow.
They'd just turned the glass,
Half an hour left to go.
Then the rattle of muskets,
Shouts- Then something explodes.
Turning to the mid he cursed.
Just our luck don't ya know.

Copyright Michael Aye

The Fireship

`Hit were like a roaring inferno-
The fires `o `ell so bright.
Flames leaping upwards,
Like fireworks in the night.
`Hit started on the main deck,
Quick like it climbed the mast.
The sails be ablaze now,
The flame `as spread so fast.
`Hits set a course for the flagship
Less some `ow it's turned.
The only choice Jack tar `as
Is jump ship or burn.

Copyrighted Michael Aye

Grog

I stands here confused,
Me heads in a fog.
Can't finds me ship,
Damn that ole grog.
Me eyes be awash,
Me timbers not steady.
I tries to walk down,
This heaving old Jetty.
There be a boatman,
He'll carry me out;
For a shilling or two,
The larcenous old lout!

Copyright Michael Aye

An Ole Salt

I'm writing you this letter,
There's things I gotta say.
The innocent boy that sailed away,
Returns a worldly man today.
It was a mighty warship,
On her rolls I signed my name.
After thirty years at sea,
It's saltwater that fills my veins.
I fought the wind -n- weather;
I battled a raging sea.
Round after round I fired the big guns,
As men died around me.
I tasted wine in many a port.
Read letters 'till my heart yearned.
Many's the night I smoked my pipe,
While sitting on the stern.
They tell me now I must retire;
My able days are done.
And what the sea took away,
The sea now returns.

Copyrighted Michael Aye

The Gun Captain

The Cap'n yells- "Fire!"
The guns leap as one.
Round after round,
We worked 'um 'till we's numb.
I smells the stench 'o powder,
I's blinded by the smoke.
It hurts me chest to breathe,
It makes me cough and choke.
I felt the ship shudder,
They's scored another hit.
A gun be overturned;
The main mast is split.
Broadside after broadside,
That last 'un were the worse.
I see the chaplain praying,
I 'urd the bosun curse.
I steals a look about me,
So many mates lay dead.
The thunder from the guns,
Echoes thru me head.
I 'ear the word, "cease fire."
Yonder ship 'as struck.
I give a sigh and wipes me face,
A victory cheer goes up.

Copyrighted Michael Aye

Final Victory

The mighty ship entered port,
Her yards set cockbill.
A loyal crew mourned the death,
Their brave captain killed.
The battle had been fought and won.
They fired the last broadside.
As enemy colors floated down,
The good captain died.

Copyright Michael Aye

Men Who Sail the Sea

You laugh, you drink, you dance,
You men who sail the sea.
For tomorrow who's to know,
What might assail upon thee.
Be it gale or sword or cannon,
-A sinking ship it be.
So live life heartily,
You men who sail the sea.

Copyrighted Michael Aye

The Forgotten Salt

I walked out of Whitehall,
Had my orders in my hand.
I saw this ragged shell,
That once had been a man.
He leaned against the building,
A timber for a leg.
He once sailed with Nelson,
Now he had to beg.
Forgotten the days of glory,
Long cast over the side.
Our country now shuns them,
Men crippled, and those who died.
I fished out a guinea,
He deserved so much more.
He said, "Thank you kindly Cap'n,
Lost me leg at Trafalgar.

Copyrighted Michael Aye

The Battle Won

The man listened quietly
To their captain speak.
It had been a hard voyage
The mission now complete.
Gone were some mates
Cut down by the guns.
A savage battle fought
Out numbered still they won.
We're headed for home lads
The butcher's bill I fear.
A double tot for every man
The crew gave a cheer.

Copyrighted Michael Aye

Newgate Jig

The pirate eyed the crowd outside
They came to see him hang.
He'd once struck fear in many a man
By the mention of his name.
Many a captain lost his ship
Their life blood to his blade.
Many a young girl he had kissed
Till that dreadful day.
Better he'd been struck down
Now resigned to his fate.
It was like a circus outside
In the yard of Newgate.

Copyrighted Michael Aye