Billy Boy

1. Where ha' ye bin all the day,
   Billy Boy, Billy Boy
Where ha' ye bin all the day,
   Me Billy boy?

I've been walkin' all the day
   with me charmin' Nancy Grey☐
**And me Nancy kittl'd me fancy,
Oh, me charmin' Billy Boy!**

2. Is she fit to be your wife
   Billy Boy, Billy Boy?
Is she fit to be your wife **Me Billy boy?**

She's as fit to be me wife -
   As the fork is to the knife
**And me Nancy kittl'd me fancy,
Oh, me charmin' Billy Boy!**

3. Can she cook a bit o' steak?
   Billy Boy, Billy Boy
Can she cook a bit o' steak **Me Billy boy?**

She can cook a bit o' steak,
   Aye, and make a girdle cake -
**And me Nancy kittl'd me fancy,
Oh, me charmin' Billy Boy!**

4. Can she bake a cherry pie?
   Billy Boy, Billy Boy
Can she bake a cherry pie **Me Billy boy?**

She can bake a cherry pie
   Quick as a cat can wink its eye -
**And me Nancy kittl'd me fancy,
Oh, me charmin' Billy Boy!**

4. Can she make a feather bed?
   Billy Boy, Billy Boy
Can she make a feather bed **Me Billy boy?**

She can make a feather bed
   Fit for any sailor's head -
.

**And me Nancy kittl'd me fancy,
Oh, me charmin' Billy Boy!**

Alan Mills sings this version at
https://youtu.be/3sfoDXaOtaY

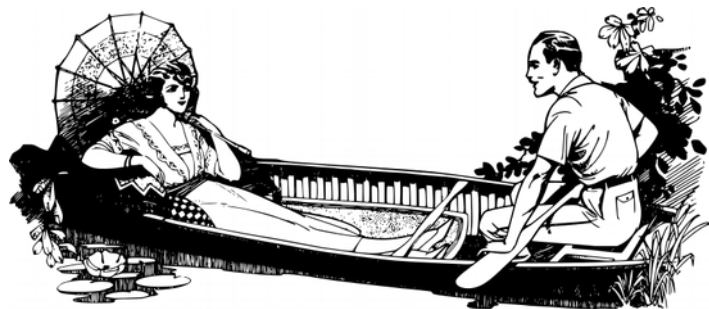Or a more suggestive version by Ian Page at
https://youtu.be/5GzhjKS7yNU

Advertisement for *Sapolio* soap,
from **Flickr Commons**

Other popular verses

Can she cook a dainty stew? ...
Aye she can cook a dainty stew -
And Singin' Hinnies too.

Did ye take her for a ride? ...
Aye, I took her for a ride -
and a little bit mair beside.

Couple in a boat by j4p4n
from https://openclipart.org/

Notes:

A **Capstan** shanty, from a Northumbrian folk song.

The shanty would have had verses added or removed according to the length of the job. This shanty, like many others, contains a fair amount of innuendo in the recorded versions..

Kittled - tickled

Gairdle cake - girdle or griddle cake, ie not baked

Singing Hinnies - a kind of Sally Lunn teacake only larger. Usually plentifully besprinkled with currants, in which case it is designated by pitmen as "Singin' Hinnies wi' smaea co fizzors" (small coal fizzers.)

Richard Runciman **Terry**, *The Shanty Book, Sailor Shanties*, 1921, gives four verses; the rest, he says, being too Rabelasian to print.

Here it is with a different tune, recorded by **Salt of the Earth**, on CD **Tomorrow's Tide**

1. Where ha' ye bin all the day,
   my boy, Billy Boy?□
Where ha' ye bin all the day,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
□ I've been walkin' on the quay,
   with me charmin' Nancy Grey
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!

2. And did you take her for a ride,
   my boy, Billy Boy?
And did you take her for a ride,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   Yes, I took her for a ride,
   and a little more beside,
Nancy kittl'd me fancy,
                oh, me charmin' Billy Boy!

3. Can she cook a bit o' steak,
   my boy, Billy Boy?
Can she cook a bit o' steak,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   She can cook a bit o' steak,
   aye, an' make a gairdle cake,
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!

4. Can she make an Irish stew,
   my boy, Billy Boy?
Can she make an Irish stew
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   She can make an Irish stew,
   aye, an' "Singin' Hinnies" too
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!

5. Can she lie close unto thee,
   my boy, Billy Boy?
Can she lie close unto thee,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   She can lie close unto me,
   like the bark is to the tree,
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!

6. Can she make a feather bed,
   my boy, Billy Boy?
Can she make a feather bed,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   She can make a feather bed,
   fit for any sailor's head
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!

7. And is she fit to be your wife,
   my boy, Billy Boy?
Is she fit to be your wife,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   Aye, she's as fit to be me wife
   as the fork is to the knife!
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!

8. **Where ha' ye bin all the day,**
   my boy, Billy Boy?
Where ha' ye bin all the day,
                me charmin' Billy Boy?
   I've been walkin' on the quay,
   with me charmin' Nancy Grey
Nancy kittl'd me fancy, oh,
                me charmin' Billy Boy!