

## Blow Ye Winds

We will hear **David Coffin**, on CD: *Safe in the Harbour*. David sing the verses I have numbered; other verses, here in smaller font, are missed.

**1.** 'Tis advertised in Boston, New York, and Buffalo  
Five hundred brave Americans a-whalin' for to go.

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**

**2.** They send you to New Bedford, that famous whaling port,  
And give you to some land sharks to board and fit you out.

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**

They send you to a boardin' house, there for a time to dwell;  
The thieves there they are thicker than the other side of Hell.

**3.** They tell you of the clipper ships a-runnin' in and out,  
And say you'll take five hundred sperm before you're six months out.

**4.** And now we are at sea, my boys, the wind comes on to blow;  
One-half the watch is sick on deck, the other half below.

But as for the provisions, we don't get half enough;  
A little bit of stinking beef and a little bag of duff.

Then there's the running rigging which you're supposed to know;  
It's "Lay aloft, you son of a whore, or overboard you go!"

The cooper's at the vice bench a-making iron poles;  
The mate's upon the main-hatch a-blasting all our souls.

**5.** The skipper's on the quarterdeck a-squintin' at the sails,  
When up aloft the lookout sights a bloody school of whales.

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear**

**And blow, boys, blow.**

**6.** Then lower down the boats, my boys, and after him we'll travel,  
But if you get too near his flukes, he'll kick you to the Devil.

Then our waist-boat got down and we made a good start.  
"Lay on me now, you bleeders, for I'm hell for a long dart."

Then the harpoon it struck and the whale he sped away,  
But whatever he done, me boys, he gave us fair play.

Now we got him turned up and we towed him alongside,...

**7.** And now that he is ours, me boys, we'll bring 'im alongside,  
Then over with our blubber-hooks and rob him of his hide.

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**

Now the bosun overside the lift-tackle do haul,  
And the mate there in the main-chains, so loudly he do bawl.

Next comes the stowing down, boys, to take both night and day  
"You'll have a tanner apiece, boys, on the hundred and ninetieth lay."

Now we're all bound into Tumbez, that blasted whaling port,  
And if you run away, me boys, you surely will get caught.

Now we're bound for Talcahuana, all in our manly power,  
Where the skipper can buy a whorehouse for half a barrel of flour.

**8.** When we get home, our ship made fast, when we get through our sailin',  
A brimming glass around we'll pass, and damn this blubber whalin'.

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**

# Blow Ye Winds

## Notes:

**Alternative Titles:** Blow boys blow, Blow ye winds, Blow ye winds in the mornin', Blow ye winds high-oh, The Boston come-ye-all.

**Gale Huntington**, Elon, 1964 (corr 1970), *Songs the Whalermen Sang*, wrote:

This is one of the best known of the whaling songs, [my] version is from the Elizabeth Swift journal of 1859 is called only "whaling song" and there is no indication of a chorus. But the song always was sung with a chorus and often sung as a chantey.

**Running gear** - tackle, especially equipment for hauling.

**New Bedford - New Bedford** had its heyday as a whaling station in the 19th century. Its whaling museum has a very interesting web site. (see [Yankee Whalermen](#))

**Sperm** - sperm whale

**Flukes** - the lobes of the whale's tail.

**Waist-boat** - a boat carried in the waist of a whaling vessel on the port side and usually commanded by the second mate (Merriam Webster).

**Blubber-hooks** - to hold the blubber while being cut - see <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/whaling-tools/>

**Shanty Crew** sing this amusing version:

1. 'Twas on a Sunday morning down across the Southern Sea  
Our ship she lay at anchor while awaiting for a breeze,  
Singin' ...

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds high-oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**

2. The captain he was down below, the men at the work about,  
When under our bow we heard a splash and then a lusty shout,  
Singin' ...

3. "Man overboard" the lookout cried and forward we all ran,  
And hanging through our larboard chain was a bluff old green merman,  
Singin' ...

4. Hullo, cried the mate, as bold as brass, What ho, shipmates! cried he,  
I'd like to speak you merman I've a favour to ask you see,  
Singin' ...

5. I've been out all night in a ruddy sea-fight to the bottom of the deep blue sea,  
And I've just come home and found that you have caused a hell of a spree,  
Singin' ...

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**

6.. You've dropped your anchor afore me house and locked me only door,  
And me wife's locked in and she can't get out now we's number four,  
Singin' ...

7. The anchor shall be hove at once and me wife and me babes set free,  
But I never saw a scale, from a fret or a whale that could speak to me,  
Singin' ...

8. Why you [figure out?] like a sailor's bold and you speak like a human man  
But where did you get such a bloody big tail? Answer me that if you can.,  
Singin' ...

9. A long time ago from the ship Hero, I fell overboard in a gale  
And away below where the seaweeds grow I met a girl with a tail,  
Singin' ...

10. She saved me life, and I made her me wife, and me legs changed instantly,  
And now I'm married to a sweet mermaid at the bottom of the deep blue sea,  
Singin' ...

11. So I'll stay here for the rest of me life, with never a worry nor care  
Goodbye to the life of a sailor bold, my lot with the fishes I'll share,  
Singin' ...

**Blow ye winds in the morning,  
Blow ye winds High-Oh  
Clear away your running gear  
And blow, boys, blow.**