

Blow the Man Down (The Flash Packet)

1. As I was a walking down Paradise Street
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down
A sassy flash clipper I chanced for to meet
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
2. Of the port that she hailed from I cannot say
much
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down
But by her appearance I took her for Dutch.
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
3. Her flag was three colours, her mast-head
was low
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down.
She was round in the counter and bluff at the
bow
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
4. From larboard to starboard, and so sailed she
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down.
She was sailing at large, she was running free
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
5. I fired my bow-chaser, the signal she knew
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down
She backed her main tops'l and for me hove to,
Gimme some time to blow the man down.

Notes:

Originally a forebitter, used on **capstan** and **pumps**

Alternative Titles: Blow the man down, The flash packet.

Hugill, Stan, 1994, in *Shanties from the Seven Seas*:

... does not give a chorus for this version, but another versions goes like this:

Blow the man down, bullies, blow the man down
(Timme) Way, hey, blow the man down
Blow him right back to Liverpool Town
Gimme some time to blow the man down.

Hugill gives six (6) versions of Blow the Man Down.
They are

- (a) The Flash Packet (this one)
- (b) The Sailing of the Blackballer
- (c) The Flying Fish Sailor
- (d) The Fishes
- (e) The milkmaid
- (f) Bungyereye

6. She was bowling along with the wind blowing
free
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down
She clewed up her courses and waited for me
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
7. I hailed her in English, she answered me clear
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down
"I'm from the Black Arrow bound for the
Shakespeare."
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
8. I tipped her me flipper, and took her in tow.
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down.
And yard-arm to yard-arm away we did go.
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
9. She then took me up to her lily-white room
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down.
And there all the evening we danced and we
spooned
Gimme some time to blow the man down.
10. My shot-locker's empty, me powder's all
spent
(Timme) way, hey, blow the man down.
I've plenty of time boys to think and repent.
Gimme some time to blow the man down.

Notes on the words

Paradise Street - sailor-town in Liverpool

Timme - to me?

Blow the man down - knock the man down
It is in version (c) Flying Fish Sailor, there the singer
starts a fight - and blows the man down!

Counter - part of a ship's stern extending from the
water line to the extreme outward swell.
or the part of the stern that overhangs the water aft of
the rudder

Larboard - port side

Bow-chaser - small cannon fitted in the bows,
particularly of East Indiamen.

Clewed up - raised the lower corners using clew line

Course - the sail on the lowest yard of a mast

Yardarm - either end of a yard

You may wish to compare this with my notes on

- a) Blow the man down ([Flying fish sailor](#)) and
- b) [Ratcliffe Highway](#)