

## Leaving of Liverpool

1. Fare thee well, you Princes Landing Stage  
River Mersey, fare thee well.  
For you know it's going to be a  
long, long time  
Before I see you again.

**So fare thee well, my own true love,  
When I return, united we will be.  
It's not the leaving of Liverpool  
that grieves me,  
But my darling when I think of thee.**

2. I am bound for Californi-a,  
By way of the stormy Cape Horn.  
And you know I'll write to you a letter,  
me love,  
When we are homeward bound.

**So fare thee well my own true love,  
When I return, united we will be.  
It's not the leaving of Liverpool  
that grieves me,  
But my darling when I think of thee.**

3. I have signed on a Yankee clipper ship,  
"David Crockett" is her name.  
And her captain's name is Burgess -  
And they say she's a floating shame.

**So fare thee well my own true love,  
When I return, united we will be.  
It's not the leaving of Liverpool that  
grieves me,  
But my darling when I think of thee.**

4. It's my second time with Burgess in the  
Crockett,  
I reckon I knows him well.  
If a man be a sailor he will get along,  
If he's not, then he's sure in hell!

**So fare thee well my own true love,  
When I return, united we will be.  
It's not the leaving of Liverpool  
that grieves me,  
But my darling when I think of thee.**

5. The tug is waiting by the pierhead  
To take us down the stream,  
Our sails are loose and the anchor is  
stowed,  
So fare thee well again.

**So fare thee well my own true love,  
When I return united we will be.  
It's not the leaving of Liverpool  
that grieves me,  
But my darling when I think of thee.**

6. Farewell to Lower Frederick Street,  
Anson Terrace and old Parkie Lane.  
For you know it's going to be a  
long, long time  
Before I see you again.

**So fare thee well my own true love,  
When I return united we will be.  
It's not the leaving of Liverpool  
that grieves me,  
But my darling when I think of thee.**



Thomas Goldsworth Dutton; William Foster, c1854: *Clipper ship Swiftsure 1854*  
A print at [National Maritime Museum](#), Greenwich. via [wikimedia commons](#).

### Notes:

Shanty used mainly at the **capstan**

**Other Titles:** Fare thee well my own true love,  
The Leaving of Liverpool.

Hear **Hughie Jones** (formerly of The Spinners, later a solo singer) on on Youtube at [youtu.be/5GMDCGFjvs8](https://youtu.be/5GMDCGFjvs8)

Spot the Liverpool place names!

- Princes Landing Stage,
- River Mersey,
- Lower Frederick Street,
- Anson Terrace,
- Park Lane.

**Doerflinger**, William Main, 1972, in *Songs of the Sailor and Lumberman*, wrote:

Through the great port of Liverpool passed most of the trade between the UK and the Americas. ... Many of the famous American clippers were familiar sights in the Mersey, among them the three-skysail-yarder **David Crocket** of New York.

... in 1863 she first arrived [in Liverpool] under command of Captain John A **Burgess** of Massachusetts.

Doerflinger collected the song from shanty man **Dick Maitland**, who learned it about **1885**:. Dick told Doerflinger:

"I was on deck one night when I heard a Liverpool man singing it in the f'c'stle ... Yessir, that song hit the spot!"

The **Young America**, shown below, was a well-known visitor to Liverpool. She was an American clipper launched in the same year as the David Crocket.



**Young America, 1853 clipper ship**

From **Clark**, Arthur H. (1910) *The Clipper Ship Era, An Epitome of Famous American and British Clipper Ships, Their Owners, Builders, Commanders, and Crews, 1843-1869*, New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, (p. 232)  
via [Wikimedia Commons](#).