

## Sam's Gone Away (On board a Man o' War)

I wish I was a cabin boy, on board a man o'  
war! - **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

I wish I was a cabin boy, on board a man o'  
war! - **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys,  
Pretty work, I say!  
Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

I wish I was the galley rat, on board a man o'  
war! **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys,  
Pretty work, I say!  
Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

I wish I was a gunner's mate on board a man  
o' war! **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys, ...**

I wish I was a tops'l man on board a man o'  
war! **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys, ...**

I wish I was the midshipman, on board a man  
o' war! **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys, ...**

I wish I was a captain, on board a man o' war!  
**Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys, ...**

I wish I was the admiral on board a man o'  
war! **Hey!**

**Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

**Pretty work, brave boys,  
Pretty work, I say!  
Sam's gone away, on board a man o' war.**

### Notes

A Caribbean whaling shanty - for rowing? hauling?

**Alternatives:** Sam gone away, Sammy's gone away

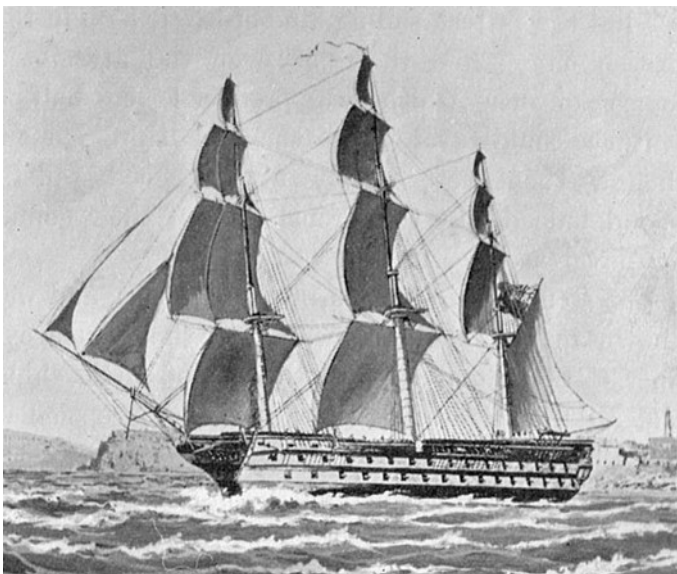
The job of the shantyman to supply enough verses for the job in hand is particularly easy in this song as a man o' war could have 700 or so crew.

The [Exmouth Shantymen](#) wrote:

This is a traditional song sung by Barouallie whalers from St Vincent on the [Windward Islands](#). ... Edgar Mulrairie, a Barouallie whaler, ... first heard it in the 1940's when he began whaling as a young man. His father had been a harpooner and one of the first whalers in Barrouallie. Mulrairie found the work hard, and sometimes dangerous. His experiences included long hot days rowing, severe squalls, and having the boat stove in by a sperm whale.

Try the Jstor article on [Shore Whaling in St. Vincent Island, West Indies](#).

Some people sing "on board de man o'war" instead of singing "on board a man o' war,"



**HMS Vengeance, launched 1824, sold 1897.**

From the book:

**Life of Vice Admiral Sir George Tryon KCB'**

by Rear Admiral C. C. Penrose Fitzgerald

Published by William Blackwood and sons, Edinburgh and London, 1897.

Via [wikimedia commons](#).