

Stormy Weather Boys

1. We were laying in the Surrey Dock one day,
The mate knew that it was time to get
under way.

**Stormy weather boys,
Stormy weather boys,
When the wind blows our barge will go.**

2. He's homeward bound but he's out of luck,
'Cause the skipper's half drunk in
'The Dog and Duck'.

**Stormy weather boys,
Stormy weather boys,
When the wind blows our barge will go.**

3. The skipper came aboard with a girl on
his arm,
He's going to give his barge in and take a farm

4. Then the mate ran for'ard and the cook
fell in the dock,
And the skipper got his fingers in the
main sheet block.

5. At last we're off down Lime'ouse Reach,
But the leeboards knocked on Greenwich
Beach.

6. We shoves her off and away we go,
But the skipper's got a barrel of beer below.

7. She fills away and she sails like heck,
But there ain't no bargeman up on deck.

8. There's a crash and a bump and she's
ashore
The mate says Christ we're on the Nore.

9. Then up jumps a mermaid covered in mud,
We took her down the foc's'le and had
a good time.

10. On the top of the tide the barge did fleet,
When the mate sees a ghost on
the tops'l sheet.

11. So away we go and the ghost did steer,
And the cook drank the dregs of the
Old Man's beer.

12. We lay close-hauled round Orford Ness,
When the wind backed round to the
south-sou-west.

13. We reached our port all safe and sound,
And tied 'er up in Yarmouth Town.

14. So after all our fears and alarms,
We all ended up in 'The Druid's Arms'.

**Stormy weather boys,
Stormy weather boys,
When the wind blows our barge will go.**

You can hear [Bob Roberts](#) sing this bargemen's song at <https://youtu.be/9HsU9rG9rjk>

Notes

[Bob Roberts](#) (1907-1982) was a bargemaster, the last captain of a British commercial vessel operating under sail.

He sailed a "**spritty barge**", a flat-bottomed sailing barge used along the British east coast and rigged with a spritsail ...



Spritsail diagram, by Kirby Schroeder, [wikimedia commons](#),

"[These Thames barges] traded all over the North Sea and English Channel and some of them even crossed the Atlantic under sail. They were only called barges because they were flat-bottomed so they could get into shallow harbours such as Rye." <https://ryesown.co.uk/the-port-of-rye/>

There are some interesting articles in <https://en.wikipedia.org> including:

Thames sailing barge (or **spritty**) - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thames_sailing_barge,

Spritsail - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spritsail>,

Bob Roberts (folksinger) - [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Roberts_\(folksinger\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Roberts_(folksinger)),

Bob first heard Stormy Old Weather in the 1920's from octogenarian Captain Ventris [\[Mainly Norfolk\]](#)