

1. There was a ship, she sailed to Spain

**O ho, roll and go!**

There was a ship came home again.

**Tommy's on the topsail yard!**

2. And what do you think was in her hold?

**O ho, roll and go!**

There was diamonds, there was gold.

**Tommy's on the topsail yard!**

3. And what was in her lazareet?

**O ho, roll and go!**

Good split peas and bad bull meat.

**Tommy's on the topsail yard!**

4. O, many a sailorman gets drowned,

**O ho, roll and go!**

Many a sailorman gets drowned.

**Tommy's on the topsail yard!**

**Notes:**

A halyard shanty

**Names:** Roll and go, Tommy's on the tops'l yard.

Not to be confused with the other songs named Roll and go!

Tommy's on the topsail yard was used mainly for quick, light pulls on the **royal halyard**, despite the words in the refrain. The royal yard was higher than the topsail yard. Also used for tack and sheets.

**Tops'l yard** (topsail yard) - the yard (spar) from which the topsail hangs. The tops'l yard is next above the mails'l yard.

The illustration below shows the mains'l being furled and the tops'l yard is the spar above it, mostly hidden behind the lower topsail.

**Lazareet** - the term was used for a ship-board room set aside as sick-bay, or the store room when no-one was sick. In Mediterranean countries, a lazareet is a leper quarter.

We can hear **Bobert** sing at

<https://youtu.be/9gRCE8x4HxA>



*Furling sail on the mainyard of the Parma*, by Alan Villiers, 1932-3,  
National Maritime Museum, [www.nmm.ac.uk/](http://www.nmm.ac.uk/)  
(via [wikimedia](#))