

Wareham Whaler's Songbook

On Board of a Man of War

AKA 'Aboard a Man o War' and 'The Press Gang'

Traditional

As I walked out on a London street
A press gang there I chanced for to meet
They asked me if I'd join the fleet
On board of a man of war, boys

Pray brother shipmates tell me true
What sort of usage they give you
That I may know before I go
On board of a man of war, boys

But when I got there to my surprise
All that they told me was shocking lies
there was a row, and a bloody old row
On board of a man of war, boys

The first thing they did they took me in hand
They flogged me with a tarry strand
They flogged me till I could not stand
On board of a man of war, boys

They hung me up by my two thumbs
They cut me till the blood did run
And that was the usage they gave me
On board of a man of war, boys

I married a wife her name was Grace
I oft times cursed her ugly face
saying its you that has brought me to this disgrace
On board of a man of war, boys

If I can get one foot on shore
some other pretty girl I'd marry once more
Neither winds nor waves could entice me any more
On board of a man of war, boys