

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Eastern Light

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'Twas of my sad misfortune in eighteen hundred and seventy-three,
I shipped on board the fisherman right off a drunken spree.

The Eastern Light it being her name, as you may understand,
We were bound away on a salt trip to the Banks of Newfoundland.

Our Captain's name being McCloud, the truth to you I'll tell,
He was a jolly Irishman, I 'spose you all know well.

He had a jug of rum on board that mustered the whole of our crew,
And we drank the health of the Gloucester girls when bidding them adieu.

Then Eastern Point we rounded by, left Thatcher's far behind,
We kept her east-south-east, my boys, the Grand Banks for to find.

And on our passage going out we were busily employed
Rigging up our fishing gear the halibut to decoy.

It's now we're anchored on the Banks our trials do begin,
The way the crew's all serving me I think it is a sin.

They had their choice of dories, and they chose their trawls likewise;
If I opened my mouth to say a word, 'twas 'Damn!' and "Bugger my eyes"

We cruised all o'er the foggy bank the space of eighteen days,
We bearded a couple of Frenchmen, no brandy could we raise.

The halibut they were getting scarce, we run our cod-fish gear,
McCloud he says, 'I'll fill her up, if it takes a half a year.

So early in the morning the cook he loudly bawled,
'Come, jump and get your breakfast, boys, and go and haul your trawls.

You'll have hardly time to light your pipe when over your dory goes,
You'll have to make three sets today no matter how it blows.'

'Twas Saturday the tenth day of June, the Captain he loudly shouts,
'Come, jerk along your dories, boys, we'll break the anchor out.'

'Our provisions they are getting scarce, no longer can we stay,
So give her the big mainsail, we'll get her under way.

Now mind not lose a buoy line, an anchor or a knife,
For if you do it will be charged to you, now you can bet your life.

'And when you stand your watch, my boys, be sure and stay on deck,
If anything should happen you'll find it on your check.'

So now the anchor's on the bow and we are homeward bound,
And when we get in Gloucester we'll pass the glasses round.

We'll go down to Johnny the Lager and have a regular tight,
We'll drink the health of the Gloucester girls,
 success to the Eastern Light.

DT #820

Laws D11

From Eckstorm, Minstrelsy of Maine

Taken down in October, Igzg, from the singing of Captain Archie S. Spurling, of
Islesford, Maine, who learned it many years ago on board a fishing vessel. The
Eastern Light, 70 tons, was built in 1866 and was owned by Maddocks and
Company, of Gloucester.

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