

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## The Flash Packet

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1. It's of a flash packet, a ship of great fame  
In the western Atlantic she bears a hard name  
With crews of ill usage, of every degree  
All slaves of the galley they plough the salt sea.
2. All thoughts of tobacco you must leave behind;  
If you spit upon deck your death warrant is signed  
If you spit on the gangway or out over the stern  
You're sure of six dozen, by the way of no harm.
3. At four in the morning, our work it began  
For brooms and for buckets cries every man  
And fore- and main-top, O they loudly do bawl  
For sand and holystone, both great and small.
4. And now me brave heroes, comes the best of our fun  
When you have to reef tops'ls and tack ship as one  
With the boys up aloft and the helm run down  
"Stand by, tops'l halliards when the main boom swings round."
5. "Stand by, tops'l halliards, for bowline and all  
Then slack away tops'ls and let the wind haul  
Aloft and way out and take two reefs in one."  
For all in a moment this work must be done.
6. Now there's our old mate, O you all know him well  
He comes upon deck and he cuts a great swell,  
With a "Give a hand here, boys" and "lend a hand, there"  
Down on the lee gangway, you oughta hear him swear.
7. repeat v.1

- from Capt. Charles Cates (1899-1960) of Vancouver: PJT Coll no. 176.

JB