

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

www.traditionalmusic.co.uk

Gunboat Sailors

Gunboat Sailors

We are only gunboat sailors, we can't boast of what we did,
Like the "big 16" that traveled 'round the Horn;
Though we weathered the typhoons And sailed for many moons
In places where no white man e'er was born.
Our only boast and brag is that we have shown the flag
To the heathen and the wanderers from home,
And if ignorant we be, we don't ask for sympathy
From the candy kids that treat us all with scorn.
Oh,

cho: Gunboat sailors, so misunderstood

Bah! Bah! Bah!

They say our heads are made of wood,

Bah! Bah! Bah!

Battleship sailors, what heavenly light

Makes you see yourselves so bright?

Why don't you pity our horrible plight,

Bah! Bah! Bah!

Though the creek be broad or narrow, though the pilot doesn't
know

We go through, for gunboat sailors never mind;
And if the bottom's mud, the river's far from flood,
Right there the gunboat sailors you will find.
And if the bottom's sand, as hard as good dry land,
Why, faith, we jump the bar and jump it blind,
For on the other side the river's open wide,
And China keeps old Uncle Sam in mind.

To the Legions of the Lost Ones, to the Cohorts of the Damned,
We seem to be forever more assigned;
For when we left the Battle Fleet, we left our laurels too,
And since, we've fallen far away behind.
And when there's trouble out, do not shriek or yell or shout,
But quickly go and gunboat sailors find,
They may fly no pennants free, but you'll know them, don't you
see
By the ready way in which each speaks his mind.

Final Chorus:

We're the gunboat sailors whose work's ne'er through,
Bah! Bah! Bah!
Our boat is from Wusung as far as Wuhu,
Bah! Bah! Bah! ,
Navy Department, though we may be,
Out of the Navy it seems to me,
Take us away from the Heathen Chinees,
Bah! Bah! Bah!

Tune: Whiffenpoof Song
From Book of Navy Songs, USNA
RG