

I sing of a frigate, a frigate of fame
The Flash Frigate

I sing of a frigate, a frigate of fame,
And in the West Indies she bore a great name,
For cruel, hard treatment of every degree,
Like slaves in the galleys we ploughed the salt sea.

2. At four in the morning our day's work begun;
"Come, lash up your hammocks, boys, every one."
Seven turns with the lashing so neatly must show,
And all of one size through a hoop they must show.

3. The next thing we do is to holystone the decks,
Mizzen-topmen from the forehatch their buckets must fetch,
And its fore and main topmen so loudly they bawl,
Come, fetch up your holystones, squilgees and all.

4. The decks being scrubbed and the rigging coiled down,
It's clean up your bright work which is found all around,
Your gun-caps and aprons so neatly must shine,
And in white frocks and trousers you must all toe the line.

5. The next thing we hear is "All hands to make sail!"
"Way aloft!" and "Lay out!" and "Let fall!" is the hail,
O, your royals and your skysails and moonsails so high,
At the sound of the call your skyscrapers must fly.

6. But now, my brave boys, comes the best of the fun:
"All hands about ship and reef topsails," in one.
O, it's "lay aloft, topmen," as the helm goes down,
And it's "clew down your topsails," as the mainyard swings round.

7. "Trice up, and lay out, and take two snug reefs in one,"
And all in one moment this work must be done.
Then man your head braces, topsail-halyards and all,
And hoist away topsails as you let go and haul.

8. Our second lieutenant, you all know him well,
He comes up on deck and cuts a great swell.
O, it's "bear a hand here," and "bear a hand there."
And at the lee gangway he serves out our share.

9. Now, all your bold seaman who plough the salt sea,
Beware this frigate wherever she be,
For they'll beat you and bang you till you ain't worth a damn,
And send you an invalid to your own native land.