

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

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Andrew Ross (Andrew Rose)

(alternate:)

Andrew Ross (Andrew Rose)

Come all you seamen and give attention
And listen for a while to me
While I relate of a dreadful murder
Which happened on the briny sea

Andrew Ross*, an Orkney Sailor
Whose sufferings now I will explain
While on a voyage from Barbado
On board the vessel, Martha Jane

Oh think of what a cruel treatment
Without a friend to interpose
They whipped and mangled, gagged and strangled
The Orkney sailor, Andrew Ross

The mate and captain daily flogged him
With whips and ropes, I'll tell you true
While on Andrew Ross' bleeding body
Water mixed with salt they threw

For twenty days thus ill they used him
Oh think, what sorrow, grief and shame
Was suffered by this gallant sailor
On board the vessel Martha Jane

The captain trained his dogs to bite him
While Ross for mercy he did pray
And on the deck, his flesh in mouthfuls
Torn by the dogs they lay

Then in a water tank they put him
For twelve long hours they kept him there

While Ross for mercy he was pleading
The captain swore none should go near

The captain ordered him to swallow
A thing thereof I shall not name
The sailors all grew sick with horror
On board the vessel, Martha Jane

When nearly dead they did release him
And on the deck they did him fling
In the midst of pain and suffering
"Let us be joyful," Ross did say

The captain swore he'd make him sorry
He chained him with an iron bar
Was that not a cruel treatment
For an honest British tar

A timber hitch the captain ordered
All on a rope to be prepared
And Andrew Ross' bleeding body
Was then suspended in the air

Justice then did overtake them
Into Liverpool they came
And there found guilty of the murder
Committed on the briny ocean

Oh think of what were the captain's feelings
When both his mates they were released
To think that he alone should suffer
He could not for a while believe

"Oh God," he cries, "Is there no mercy
Must my poor wife and children dear
Be hounded out by public scorn
It nearly drives me to despair

"Soon after that an hour arrived
Captain Rodgers had to die
To satisfy offended justice
And hangs on yonder gallows high

I hope his fate will be a warning
To all such tyrants who may suppose
Who would treat an Orkney sailor
As what was done to Andrew Ross

Note: Rose rhymes better. The third verse was sometimes used as a chorus; first line of that verse sometimes sung as:
"Wasn't that most cruel usage?" RG Tune from Oxford Book of Sea Songs, Palmer recorded on Folk Songs of Britain Vol 6

SOF