

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Merman

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It was eighteen hundred and sixty-three,
Away to the southern seas.
We dropped our anchor from our bow,
A-waiting for a breeze.

"There's a man overboard," our watch cried out,
And it's for'ard all did go.
Our captain he went to the ship's dark side,
And gazed on the water so blue.

"Come and tell me, man, just as fast as you can,
What's the favor I can do for you.
I see you are a sailor by the look of your face,
And you speak like an Englishman."

"Some years ago where the big ships go,
I was lost overboard in a gale.
And down below where the seaweeds grow,
I met a pretty maiden with a tail.

"She saved my life and I made her my wife,
And my legs grew into a tail.
So forever and a day, it's happy I will be,
In the bottom of the dark blue sea.

"Now you've dropped your anchor in the front of my house,
And you've blocked up my only door.
And my wife she can't get out, for to knock and rove about
She has children three or four.

"T will break your heart if you hear them cry,
And the row they'll have with me!
For I was out last night to a small fish-fight,
In the bottom of the dark blue sea."

Our anchor shall be weighed, just as soon as you said,
And your wife and your children will be free."
And the little blue tail that was sat upon,
Went a-wiggling down the sea.

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Laws K24

From Flanders and Brown, Vermont Folksongs and Ballads:

TEXT RECORDED BY MRS. FLANDERS, November 21, I Springfield, Vermont,
from the singing of Mrs. John Anderson, from Windsor, Vermont,
as learned from her relative Gerard Denine, a miner in St.
John's, Newfoundland. The next to last verse was given as his last,
but it seems to fit where it now stands.

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