

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

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Young Allan

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All the skippers o Scarsburgh
Sat drinking at the mine;
There fell a rousing them amang,
On an unseally time.

Some there rousd their hawk, their hawk,
And some there rousd their hound,
But Young Allan rousd his comely cog,
As she stood on dry ground.

"There's nae a ship in Scarsburgh
Will sail the seas wi mine,
Except it be the Burgess Black,
Or than the smack calld Twine.

"There's nae a ship amang you a'
Will sail alang wi me,
But the comely cog o Hecklandhawk,
And Flower o Yermanie,
And the Black Snake o leve London;
They are a' gane frae me."

Out it speaks a little wee boy
Stood by Young Allan's knee;
My master has a coal-carrier
Will take the wind frae thee.

"She will gae out under the leaf,
Come in under the lee.
And nine times in a winter night
She'll turn the wind wi thee."

When they had wagerd them amang
Full fifty tuns o wine,
Besides as mickle gude black silk
As clathe their lemans fine,

When all the rest went to the tows,
All the whole night to stay,
Young Allan he went to his bower,
There with his God to pray.

"There shall nae man gang to my ship
Till I say mass and dine,
And take my leave o my lady;
Gae to my bonny ship syne.

Then they saild east on Saturday,
On Sunday sailed West;
Likewise they sailed on Monday
Till twelve, when they did rest.

At midnight dark the wind up stark,
And seas began to rout,
Till Allan and his bonny new ship
Gaed three times witherlands about.

"O," sighing says the Young Allan,
"I fear a deadly storm;
For mony a heaving sinking sea
Strikes sair on my ship's stern.

"Where will I get a little wee boy
Will take my helm in hand
Till I gang lip to my tapmast
And see for some dry land"

"O waken, waken your drunken men,
As they lye drunk wi wine;
For when ye came thro Edinbro town
Ye bought them sheen o ben.

"There was nae shoe made for my foot,
Nor glove made for my hand;
But never theless, my dear master,
I'll take your helm in hand
Till ye gang to the tall tapmast
And look for some dry land.

"And here am I, a little wee boy
Will take your helm in han
Till ye gang up to your tapmast,
But. Master, stay not lang."

"I cannot see nae day, nae day,
Nor nae meathe can I ken;
But mony a bonny feather-bed
Lyes floating on the faem,
And the comely cog o Normanshore,
She never will gang hame."

The comely cog o Nicklingame
Came sailing by his hand;
Saye, "Gae down, gae down ye gude skipper
Your ship sails on the sand."

"Come down, come down, my gude master,
Ye see not what I see,
For thro and thro our comely cog
I see the green haw sea."

"Take fifty ells o gude canvas
And wrap the ship a' round;
And pick her weell, and spare her not
And make her hale and sound."

"If ye will sail, my bonny ship,
Till we come to dry land
For ilka iron mail in you,
Of gowd there shall be ten."

The ship she listend all the while,
And, hearing of her hire,
She flew as swift threw the saut sea
As sparks do frae the fire.

The first an shore that they came till,
They ca'd it Howdoloot;
Wi drums beating and cannons shouting,
They held our gude ship out.

The next an shore that they came till,
They ca'd it Howdilee;
Wi drums beating and fifes playing,
They bare her to the sea.

The third an shore that they came till,
They ca'd it Howdilin;
Wi drums beating and pipes playing,
They towd our gude ship in.

The sailors walkd upon the shore,
Wi their auld baucheld sheen,
And thanked God and their Lady,
That brought them safe again.

"For we went out of Scarburgh
Wi fifty ships and three;
But nane o them came back again

But Young Allan, ye see."

"Come down, come down, my little wee boy,
Till I pay you your fee;
I hae but only ae daughter,
And wedded to her ye'se be."

Child #245

From MacEdward Leach, The Ballad Book

"A somewhat confused account of a boat race in which Young Allan has boasted that his ship can outsail any ship on the sea. In the race which follows, all the ships are lost in the storm that comes up except that of Young Allan which is saved by a bonny boy who takes the helm and brings the ship safe to land.

Stanza 21 in which the ship is addressed directly suggests epic formulas.

Especially in Scandinavian ballad and saga are ships directly addressed.

Text, traditional in Scotland, Buchan, ii, 11."

Tune from Bronson

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