

# The Little Hero - song lyrics

American Old-time song lyrics from [www.traditionalmusic.co.uk](http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk)

## THE LITTLE HERO

From Liverpool across the Atlantic,  
The good ship was floating o'er the deep,  
The skies bright with sunshine above us,  
And the waters beneath us asleep,  
Not a bad-tempered mariner amongst us,  
A jollier crew never sailed.  
Except the first mate, a bit of a savage,  
But good seaman as ever was hailed.  
One day he came up from below deck,  
And grasping a lad by the arm,  
A poor, little, ragged, young urchin.  
Who ought to have been home with his marm,  
And the mate asked the lad pretty roughly,  
How he dared for to be stowed " away,  
Cheating the owners and captain,  
Eating, sailing, and all without pay.

Now the lad had a face bright and winning,  
And a pair of blue eyes like a girl's,  
He looked up at the scowling first mate, boys,  
As he shook back his long shining curls,  
And he said in a voice clear and pretty.  
"My stepfather brought me on board,  
And he hid me away down the stairs,  
For to keep me he could not afford;  
And he told me the good ship would take me  
To Halifax town, oh, so far,  
And said, now the Lord, who is your father,  
Dwells where the good angels are."  
"It's a lie, " said the mate, "not your father,  
But some of these big skulkers here,  
Some milk-hearted, sort-headed sailor,  
Speak up, tell the truth; do you hear?"

Now the pair of blue eyes bright and winning,  
And shining with innocent youth,  
Looked up at the scowling first mate, boys,  
And said he, "Sir, I've told you the truth."  
Then the mate pulled his watch from his pocket,  
Just as if he'd been drawing his knife,  
If in ten minutes more you don't tell, lad.  
There's a rope and good-bye to your life.  
Eight minutes went by all in silence,  
The mate said, "Now, lad, say your say."  
His eyes slowly filling with tear drops,  
He faltering, and said, "May I pray?"  
Then the little chap he kneeled on the deck there,  
And clasping his hands on his breast.  
As he must oft have done when at home, lads,  
At night time when going to rest.

Then soft came the words, "Our Father,"  
Low and clear from those dear infant lips,  
Though low as they were, like a trumpet  
Did it sound to each man on that ship;  
Every word of that prayer then he goes through,  
To forever and ever, amen,  
And for all the bright gold of the Indies,  
I would not have heard him again.  
Off his knees was the lad sudden lifted,  
And clasped to the mate's rugged breast,  
And his husky voice muttered, "God bless you,"  
As his lips to his forehead he pressed.  
"You believe me now, sir, " said the youngster,  
Believe me, he kissed him once more.

From the music archive at [www.traditionalmusic.co.uk](http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk)

"You have laid down your life for the truth, lad,  
I'll believe you from now evermore."