

Old Figurehead Carver (Cody/Swain)

Our friend Dick Swain of Pennsylvania found this poem by the Reverend Hiram Cody of Fredericton, New Brunswick. The great merchant ship, the Marco Polo was built close by in St John. It would be nice to think that Cody may have had some personal knowledge of the ship, who knows! Dick put this tune to the poem and contributed the wonderful chorus. We love this song and hope you will too.

Race of Long Ago (Cicely Fox Smith)

Cicely Fox Smith is ever more popular for her wonderful poems. This one she entitled "Racing Clippers". It came to us from the repertoire of Bob Roberts, Bargeman and traditional singer from. Bob's words were a little changed from the original poem and he said he got the song from an engineer he worked alongside. We have changed the words a little again to make them more acceptable in modern times.

Gyetside Lass (Joe Wilson)

Written by Joe Wilson, the great Tyneside Music Hall writer and performer of the 19th century. A lovely song of courtship.

Dutch in the Medway (Kipling/Bellamy)

In the 1660s our restored monarchy was really living it up at court and there was little money for the Navy. We were having continuous skirmishes with the Dutch and Admiral de Ruyter saw that the British navy was in a sorry state and took the opportunity to sail up the River Medway and take a prize of the Royal Charles which he towed away from right under its nose. De Ruyter tied a broom to his topmast to show the world he had swept the British out of the North Sea. Kipling commented on many events in history and this song comes from the sailor's perspective. The tune, of course is by Peter Bellamy.

Is me team a ploughing (Houseman/Webber)

A cautionary tale from Housman's "Shropshire Lad" collection. Whatever the afterlife turns out to be, if you are offered a chance to take a look at what you have left behind, it may be best to refuse as there may be some surprises in store.

A New Season's Love (Dave Webber)

Written for a festival workshop in something less than an hour (not a challenge I enjoy). The broad subject was renewal, I don't write to order so this was an unusual event for me but after "singing it in" for a while with the help of Joanie Bromfield and Neal Macmillan (to whom we are also grateful for providing one of our USA safe houses) it took its final shape. I am now quite happy with the result.

Derwentwater's Farewell (Surtees/Trad)

James Radcliff Earl of Derwentwater was executed for his involvement in the 1715 Jacobite rebellion. This song was probably written by Surtees, long after the event. It appears that Derwentwater was very popular, despite being of the nobility and having spent most of his life in France. The song may be rather more romantic than factual but there are still families in Northumberland, who keep the details of their involvement in the rebellion a secret even after nearly 300 years!

Old Ship of Mine (Arden/Pelosi)

A "Pop" song from the 1930s passed to us by our friend Charlie Hardy of South Shields who was born in 1912. Charlie tells us that this song was sung on the Jarrow March and accompanied by the harmonica band formed by the journalists who accompanied the march. This song was subtitled "A Sailor's Hillbilly" as the hillbilly style of song was all the rage at the time. Very nostalgic!

The Joy of Living (McColl)

Every songwriter has a song, which they wish they had written, and this is mine. It represents an ultimate mastery of song writing and wordsmithing. Ewan just touches so many of my inner feelings in this song and I have to confess that its inclusion here is probably a little self-indulgent.

Contentment (Trad)

This song was collected from the Gorman family of Prince Edward's Island by Sandy Ives and, like the first track on this album, was passed to us by our friend Dick Swain of Pennsylvania. Rumour has it that this piece was once a shape note hymn, but is now just a hymn to life.

Song of the Sea (Rod Shearman)

Written by our much-missed friend Rod Shearman. Rod was a merchant seaman for a number of years and this song tells of the sailor's relationship with his ship. Rod sadly died in 2001 but he has left many wonderful songs, which will be a great testament to a wonderful man.

My Boy Jack (Kipling/Bellamy)

Rudyard Kipling had only one son, John. In the 1st world war he helped him join up a little early. John had 3 weeks basic training, was sent overseas and lost within a very short time. This must have been a terrible blow to his father and he wrote this poem shortly afterwards. The tune to this was created by the greatly missed, Peter Bellamy.

Lady Margaret (Trad)

Louis Killen gave us this version of this great ballad from a collection of Irish street ballads.

Catch me if you can (Trad)

We learned this song from our friend Vic Legg of Bodmin who got it from his mother Sophie, of a Cornish Travellers family. Pete & Chris Coe collected Sophie's songs in the 1970s and Veteran have a CD of Sophie and her sister Charlotte on their label, which is titled after this track.

Nelson's Lament (Trad)

Bert Lloyd found a snippet of this song and enlarged it a little. Dave first got this from Peter Bellamy in the 1980's. We understand the "folk process" has changed Bert's tune a bit over the years.

Produced by :
Dave Webber @ Old and New Tradition

Engineered by : Martin Atkinson
Recorded and Mastered at :
MARS, Bellingdon, Bucks.

Cover, Photo by : Brian Ledgard
Sleeve Design & Artwork :
Joyce McLeod @ Old and New Tradition