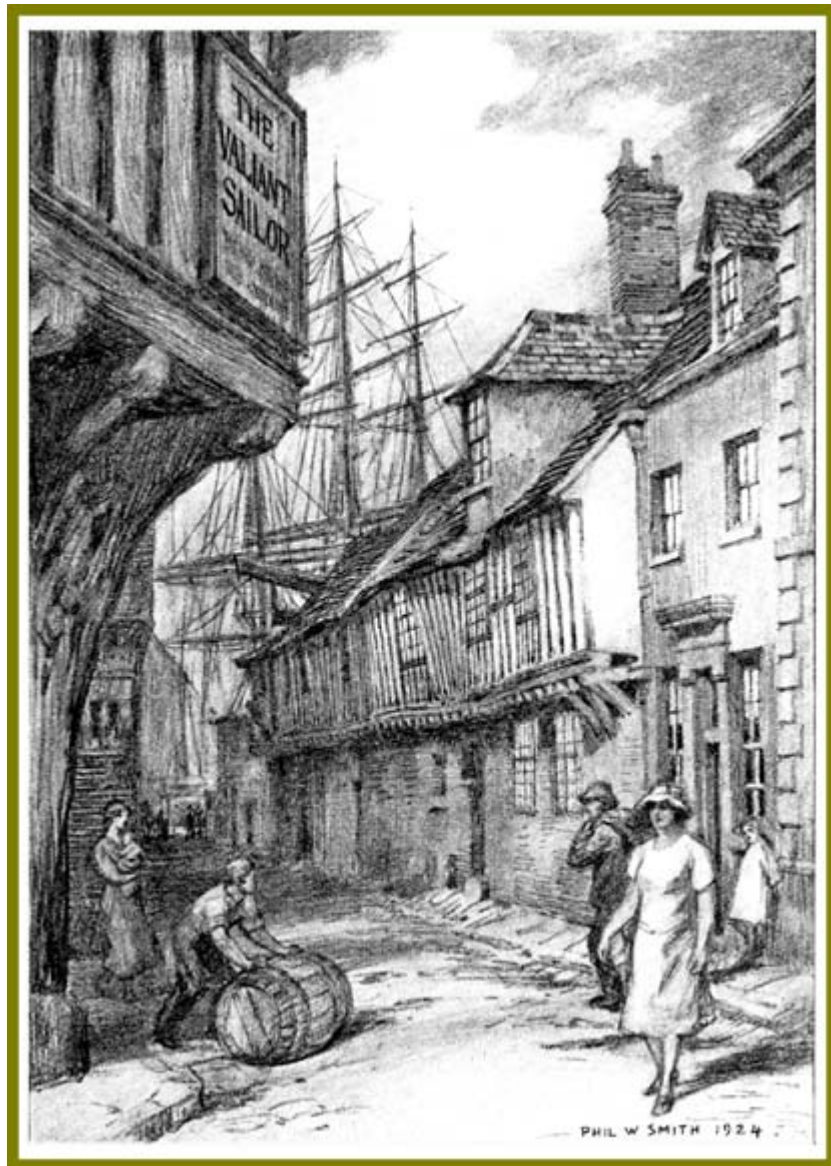


# SEA SONGS OF CICELY FOX SMITH



Edited by Charles Ipcar

# Sea Songs of Cicely Fox Smith

Edited by Charles Ipcar



Rithet's Outer Wharf - 1890's  
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

**Musical Notation by David Maxwell**

**Draft: January 31, 2010**  
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## Preface

There are few poets who do so good a job of describing the world of the deep-water sailor in the Great Age of Sail as Cicely Fox Smith. Whether it's sailors outward bound, up aloft in a Cape Horn gale, cruising the streets of sailortown, or remembering a long lost love, Smith's verses resonate with the words and phrases of those old shellbacks. Many of her poems tell a compelling yarn or portray a world which has slipped away on the "wind of a dream."

This songbook is designed to provide ready access to many of the fine songs based on the nautical poems of Smith, poems which have been adapted for singing and have been recently recorded. So far about 70 poems have been so adapted, some with multiple renditions and alternative musical settings. The Discography in the back of this songbook lists most of these recordings. The omission of any other recording only means that the editor has not been made aware of its existence; it is not a reflection on the quality of a recording.

As an editor who sings traditional and contemporary songs of the sea, I am primarily interested in Smith's nautical poems. But anyone who is interested in reviewing the entire collection of her known poems, some 625 poems at last count, in their original form may do so at their leisure at the Oldpoetry Website, [www.oldpoetry.com](http://www.oldpoetry.com), or may purchase some of her poetry books from the used book websites. Anyone who would like to hear a sample of how I lead each song in this songbook may access the "list of lyrics page" from my website, [www.charlieipcar.com](http://www.charlieipcar.com), or order one of my CD's as described on the inside back cover of this book.

There are various ways that different performers have adapted these poems for singing. Some strictly adhere to the original text. Others take great liberties and cut entire verses while adding new wording and even choruses. I believe that the adaptation process is a delicate compromise of maintaining as much of the original poem as possible while trying to fashion it into something that can be sung well to a general audience. I find that some poems are readily sung as composed while others require major surgery. You are the ultimate judge with regard to how successful any musical rendition of a poem is.

Finally, I would like to thank my friend and colleague Jim Saville who is jointly responsible for posting many of this poet's original poems on the Oldpoetry Website, where we are both forum moderators.



Bob Zentz, Danny & Joyce McLeod, and Charles Ipcar  
Cicely Fox Smith Workshop, Mystic Sea Music Festival, 2008

## Introduction

Cicely Fox Smith was born February 1, 1882, into a middle class family in Lymm, near Warrington, England, during the latter half of the reign of Queen Victoria. Her father was a barrister and her grandfather was a clergyman. Smith might have been expected to have a brief education and then to have settled down to life as a homemaker either for her family or her marriage partner. Thankfully that did not happen.

She was educated at Manchester High School for Girls from 1894 to 1897, where she described herself later as "something of a rebel." Evidently she started writing poems at a comparatively early age. In an article for the School magazine Smith wrote "I have a hazy recollection of epic poems after Pope's *Iliad*, romantic poems after Marmion stored carefully away in tin tobacco boxes when I was seven or eight." All of that early work is lost unfortunately. She published her first book of verses when she was 17 and it received favorable press comments.

Wandering the moors near her home she developed a spirit of adventure. As a girl she would follow the Holcombe hunt on foot, no mean feat. She had a fierce desire to travel to Africa but instead had to settle for a voyage to Canada. Smith likely sailed in 1904 on a steamer to Montreal, and then traveled by train to Lethbridge, Alberta, where she stayed for a time before continuing on to British Columbia. From about 1905 to 1913 she resided in Victoria at the southern tip of Vancouver Island, working as a typist for the BC Lands Department and later for an attorney on the waterfront. Her spare time was spent roaming nearby wharves and alleys, talking to residents and sailors alike. She listened to and learned from the sailors' tales until she too was able to speak with that authoritative nautical air that pervades her written work.



Victoria's Inner Harbour – 1899

In 1913 Smith sailed home to England on the eve of World War 1 and soon put her experiences to use in a great outpouring of poetry, some of it clearly focused on supporting England's war efforts. Much of her poetry was from the point of view of a sailor. This obvious knowledge made it easy to understand why so many readers assumed that Smith was male. One correspondent wrote to her as "Captain Fox Smith" and when she tried to correct him he wrote back "You say you are not a master but you must be a practical seaman. I can always detect the hand of an amateur." He was almost correct. She was familiar with life at sea as few armchair amateurs would ever be. It was only when she was well established that she started routinely using the by-line Miss C. Fox Smith or Cicely Fox Smith.

Smith initially had her poetry published in a wide variety of magazines and newspapers such as **Blackwood's Magazine**, **Blue Peter**, **Canada Monthly**, **Country Life**, **Cunard Magazine**, **Daily Chronicle**, **Grand Magazine**, **Holly Leaves**, **Outlook**, **Pall Mall Gazette**, **The Daily Mail**, **The Dolphin**, **The London Mercury**, **The Nautical Magazine**, **The Spectator**, **The Sphere**, **The Times Literary Supplement**, **Westminster Gazette**, **White Star Magazine**, **The Windsor Magazine**, **The Week** and **The Daily Colonist** (British Columbia). Last but hardly least there was **Punch Magazine** for which she wrote so many poems between 1914 and her death in 1954. She later re-published most of these poems in her poetry books.

Other books by Smith include at least four novels, numerous short stories and articles, as well as several books describing "sailortown." She also published a book of traditional sea shanties that she had personally collected, and edited a collection of sea poems and stories primarily by other authors. In 1937 Smith finally realized a childhood dream by sailing around the coast of Africa, as a guest of the Union-Castle Mail Steamship Co. Ltd., stopping in the harbors along the way; she wrote of her experiences in **All the Way Round: Sea Roads to Africa**. In the 1940's she began writing children's sea stories with her sister Margaret (Madge) Scott Smith, other travel books, history books, and a book about ship models, and contributed to and edited many other books.

The fine artwork of her brother Phil W. Smith of Portsmouth, known at the time for his etchings of Elizabethan architecture, illustrates several of her poetry and prose books.

Her literary outpourings were such as to persuade the Government to award her, at the age of 67, a modest pension for "her services to literature."

Smith kept writing to the end of her life about many things and many places but always with the accuracy and knowledge of an expert. She even penned her own gravestone epitaph:

*But from this earth  
This grave  
This dust  
My lord shall raise me up  
I trust*

Cicely Fox Smith died on April 8th, 1954, in the town of Bow where she'd been living with her sister.

Smith is gaining a wider audience once again as more and more musicians are putting her poems to music and producing many fine songs, primarily in the nautical folk song tradition. It is hoped that the present songbook will help further such interest in the work of this fine writer.

*I dreamed a dream in sailor town, a foolish dream and vain,  
Of ships and men departed, of old days come again —  
And an old song in sailor town, an old song to sing  
When shipmate meets with shipmate in the evening.*

Charles Ipcar and Jim Saville

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# The Songs



The *Veronica*, a three-masted barque, after dropping her tow





Adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar, © 2004  
 Tune: after traditional *Blow the Candles Out*

## Outward Bound

Am G Am G Am C G Am G

Now we've paint-ed the Rat-cliff High-way red To the tune of twelve-month's pay - We've

Am G Am C G Am G Am

cruised a-round from the Ship A - ground To the shores of Ti - ger Bay; — We've

C G Am G

stood our pals and we've kissed the gals — For a fort - night and a day.

Am G Am C G Am G Am

Now we're out - ward bound from Sail-or - town, And it's time we're on our way!

For there's something wrong with the dance and song,  
And there ain't no bite in beer –  
So let's set sail for New South Wales,  
Any port, long's it's not here;  
*Baltic way, down the Bay,*  
*Up the China Seas;*  
*Pensacola, Palembang,*  
*Anywhere you please.(2X)*

You can get your sea-chest out of pawn,  
Or leave it where it lies –  
You can pay your shot, or maybe not,  
You can kiss your gal good-bye;  
With a "Now, me Dear, be of good cheer,  
We'll see you next pay day,"  
*For we're outward bound from Sailortown,*  
*And it's time we're on our way!*

So we'll warp her out with a song or shout,  
And give the tug a cheer –  
Then it's off we go to Callao,  
Any port, long's it's not here;  
*Baltic way, down the Bay,*  
*Up the China Seas;*  
*Pensacola, Palembang,*  
*Anywhere you please. (2X)*

**Notes:**

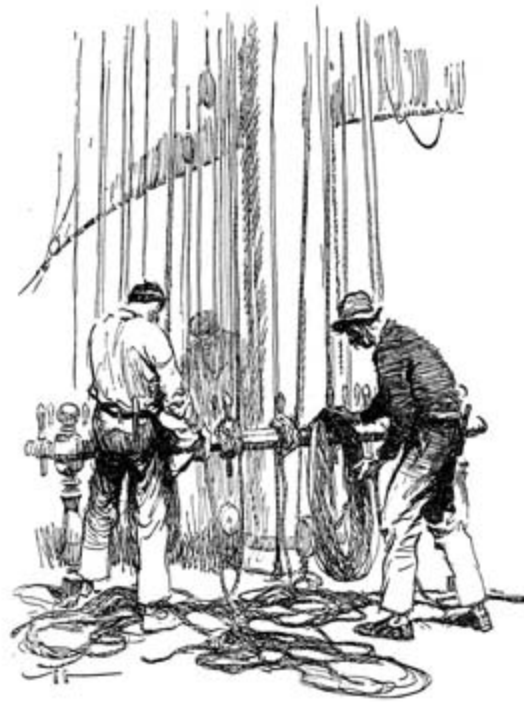
From **Full Sail: More Sea Songs and Ballads**, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Houghton Mifflin Co., NY, © 1926, pp. 69-71.

This is a classic sailortown poem where the sailors have "laid around and played around" too long and it's time to ship out.

This poem was first adapted for singing by Charles Ipcar in 2004, as recorded on **More Uncommon Sailor Songs**, © 2005.

The header graphic titled *Whorehouse District in a French Sea Port* is drawn by Stan Hugill and is from his book **Sailortown**, published by E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, US, © 1967, p. 150 facing.





As sung by Danny & Joyce McLeod, © 2003  
 Words further modified by Charles Ipcar, 2003  
 Tune: by Alan Fitzsimmons, © 1998

## So Long (All Coiled Down)

*Chorus:*

C            A m            D m            C            D m            G

All coiled down, an' it's time for us to go; — E-very sail's furled in a

F            C                            A m            D m            C            D m

neat har-bour stow' A - noth-er ship for us, an' for her a - noth-er crew And

G            C            G            F                            G            C

so long, sail - or-man, here's good luck to you! —

Fun an' friends I wish you, till your pay's all gone –  
 Pleasure while you're spending, satisfaction when you're done –  
 A chest that's never empty, when you're back to sea,  
 An' a better ship than she's been, an' a truer pal than me. (CHO)

A good berth I wish you, in a ship that's well found,  
With a decent crowd up forrard, an' her running gear all sound,  
Spars a man can trust, when it comes for to blow,  
An' no bucko mate a-bawlin', when it's your watch below. (CHO)

A good Trade I wish you, an' a fair landfall,  
Neither fog nor iceberg, long calm nor squall,  
A pleasant port to come to, when your work's all through –  
Rolling down to Sailortown, here's good luck to you. (CHO)

#### Notes:

From **Sea Songs And Ballads** 1917-1922, edited by Cicely Fox Smith, published by Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, US, © 1924, p. 101. First published in **Punch Magazine**, Volume 158, January 21, 1920, p. 44.

The last command from the mate at the end of a voyage was "All coil down." After tidying up all the loose lines on deck, the crew was then free to go ashore and get their pay. This frequently meant saying goodbye to shipmates and a ship that one would never see again, the spirit of which is well captured in this song.

This poem was first adapted for singing by Alan Fitzsimmons (UK) in 1998 as recorded by The Keelers (UK) on **The North Sea Ground**. Subsequently recorded by Danny and Joyce McLeod (UK) on **Never a Cross Word**, © 2003; also recorded by Charles Ipcar on **More Uncommon Sailor Songs**, © 2005; and by Roll & Go on **Rolling Down to Sailortown**, © 2006.

The header graphic is from an illustration, *Coiling Down*, by Gordon Grant in his book **Sail Ho!**, published by William Farquhar Payson, New York, US, © 1931, p. 8 facing; Smith had a high regard for Grant's illustrations as evidenced by her laudatory forward to **Sail Ho!**, pp. ix-x.



*Leaving Her* by Gordon Grant from his book **Sail Ho!**, published by William Farquhar Payson, New York, US, © 1931, facing p. 124

## Select Discography: Cicely Fox Smith Poems Recorded as Songs

**Breeze for a Bargeman**, by Bob Roberts, © 1981

*Race of Long Ago (Racing Clippers)*

**Port of Dreams**, by William Pint & Felicia Dale, © 1991

*The Tow-Rope Girls*

**Making Waves**, by Tom Lewis, William Pint & Felicia Dale, © 1992

*Sou' Spain*

**Seaboot Duff & Handspike Gruel**, by Pinch o' Salt, © 1995

*Sou' Spain, Cooper Ore, Eight Bells, Hoodoo, The Tow-Rope Girls, Let Her Go (a Tramp Shanty), Lee Fore Brace, Shanghai Passage, The Cape Horner, Peaceable Mister M'Gee, Home for Christmas - Old Style, A Sailor's Delight, Follow the Sea, The Half Loaf, Merchantmen*

**Tinker Tailor Soldier Singer**, by Tom Lewis, © 1995

*150 Days Out from Vancouver*

**Round the Corner**, by William Pint and Felicia Dale, © 1997

*The Tow-Rope Girls, Blue Peter*

**On the North Sea Ground**, by The Keelers, © 1998

*On the North Sea Ground, So Long*

**Tomorrow's Tide**, by Salt of the Earth, © 1998

*A Wool Fleet Chorus, Copper Ore*

**Where Seagulls Dare**, by Landlocked, © 1999

*Lee Fore Brace*

**When Our Ship Comes Home**, by Bob Walser & Friends, © 1999

*Shanghai Passage*

**Just for the Record**, by Marrowbones (Gordon Morris and Peter Massey), © 1999

*Port o' Dreams*

**Old Swansea Town**, by Baggyrinkle, ©2000

*150 Days Out from Vancouver*

**One More Pull**, by Baggyrinkle, © 2000

*Lee Fore Brace*

**Bank Trollers**, by Bob Webb, © 2000

*150 Days Out from Vancouver*

**Constant Lovers**, by Dave Webber and Anni Fentiman, © 2000

*Limehouse Reach*

**Away from It All**, by Dave Webber and Anni Fentiman, © 2002

*Race of Long Ago (Racing Clippers)*

**Full Sail: Inside the Lid**, by Gordon Morris, © 2002

*Port o' Dreams, Racing Clippers, Mainsail Haul, The Convalescent, Tom Pascoe (Told at the Pilchards), Sea Change, The Extra Hand, Admiral Dugout, Stately Blackwaller, Mariquita, The Shipkeeper, See You in Liverpool*

**Rare Thing**, by Marrowbones (Gordon Morris and Peter Massey), © 2002

*Port o' Dreams, The Shipkeeper, Racing Clippers, The Convalescent*

**Never a Cross Word**, by Danny & Joyce McLeod, © 2002

*The Capehorner, Tryphena's Extra Hand, The Stately Blackwaller, Port o' Dreams, Lee Fore Brace, So Long*

**Now & Then**, by Johnny Collins, © 2002

*Sailor Town*

**Around the Harbour Town**, by Dick Miles & Friends, © 2003

*Sailor Town*

**Tom Lewis 360°**, by Tom Lewis, © 2003

*The Tow-Rope Girls*

**England Expects**, by Dogwatch, © 2004

*A Dog's Life, Casey's Concertina, Rosario*

**Bung Up Bilge Free**, by the Portsmouth Shantymen, © 2004

*All Coiled Down (So Long), Tow-Rope Girls*

**Seven Seas**, William Pint and Felicia Dale, © 2004

*The Packet Rat*

**Uncommon Sailor Songs**, by Charlie Ipcar, © 2004

*Flying-Fish Sailor, Outward Bound, Shanghai Passage, Limehouse Reach, Port o' Dreams, Mariquita*

**More Uncommon Sailor Songs**, by Charlie Ipcar, © 2005

*Rio Grande, Lee Fore Brace, Lumber, Hastings Mill, Old Fiddle, Rosario, Pacific Coast, All Coiled Down (So Long)*

**Shipshape and Harry Fashion**, by The Harry Browns, © 2005

*The Tow-Rope Girls*

**Adventures**, by Dogwatch, © 2006

*The Packet Rat, Bill's Enemy*

**Long Road Home**, by Peter Massey, © 2006

*Conversation Book, The Long Road Home*

**Rolling Down to Sailortown**, by Roll & Go, © 2006

*Outward Bound, All Coiled Down (So Long), Mariquita, Port o' Dreams*

**Rolling Home to Bristol**, by The Harry Browns, © 2006

*A Sea Burthen, Home Boys Home (Homeward)*

**Sing the Sun into the Sky**, by Two Black Sheep & a Stallion, © 2006

*Homeward (Home, Boys, Home)*

**Closehauled on the Wind of a Dream**, by Bob Zentz, © 2007

*Ships & Folks, A Dog's Life, The Eternal Feminine, The Blue Peter, Pictures, Sea Dream, Casey's Concertina, Ice: The Bosun's Story, The Tryphena's Extra Hand, The Portsmouth Road, Ships that Pass, The Red Duster, The Ballad of the Eastern Crown, Racing Clippers, The Tow-Rope Girls, Bill's Christmases, Eight Bells, Leave Her Johnny*

**Extra Rough Tracks**, by John Hills et al of Elsie's Band, © 2007

*Gerrans Churchtown*

**Old Sailor-Poets**, by Charlie Ipcar, © 2007

*Sailor Town, Shipmates (1914), A Ship in a Bottle, The Long Road Home*

**Raising Wind with The Harry Browns**, by The Harry Browns, © 2007

*Sacramento*

**Life of Brine**, by The Roaring Forties, Australia, © 2008

*Wool Fleet Chorus, Lee Fore Brace, Mainsail Haul, The Day's Work, A Channel Rhyme*

**Sailortown Days**, by Charles Ipcar, © 2009

*Leave Her Johnnie, Mobile Bay, News in Daly's Bar, By the Old Pagoda Anchorage, Sailor's Farewell, The Traveller*

**Look Out**, by Roll & Go, © 2010

*Mobile Bay, Shipmates, Lumber, Long Road Home*





# Bibliography

Cicely Fox Smith's poetry books include:

- Songs of Greater Britain**, Sherratt & Hughes, Manchester, UK, © 1899  
**The Foremost Trail**, Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London, UK, © 1899  
**Men of Men**, Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London, UK, © 1900  
**Wings of the Morning**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1904  
**Lancashire Hunting Songs & Other Moorland Lays**, J. E. Cornish, Manchester, UK, © 1909  
**Songs in Sail**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1914  
**Sailor Town: Sea Songs and Ballads**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1914 & George H. Doran Co., New York, US, © 1919  
**The Naval Crown**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1915  
**Fighting Men**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1916  
**Small Craft**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1917 & George H. Doran Co., New York, US, © 1919  
**Rhymes of the Red Ensign**, Hodder & Stoughton, London, UK, © 1919  
**Songs and Chanties: 1914-1916**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1919  
**Ships and Folks**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1920  
**Rovings**, Elkin Mathews, London, UK, © 1921  
**Sea Songs and Ballads 1917-22**, Houghton Mifflin, London, UK, © 1923 & Houghton Mifflin, New York, US, © 1924  
**Full Sail: More Sea Songs and Ballads**, Houghton Mifflin, London, UK, © 1926  
**Sailor's Delight**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1931  
**All the Other Children**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1933  
**Here and There in England with the Painter Brangwyn**, F. Lewis, Publishers, Ltd., Leigh-on-Sea, UK, © 1945  
**Country Days and Country Ways Trudging Afoot in England**, F. Lewis, Publishers, Ltd., Leigh-on-Sea, UK, © 1947  
**Ship Models**, Country Life, London, UK, © 1951

Note, many of these books overlap in terms of poems included, and there are sometimes slight differences between poems of the same title from book to book.

Other books written, co-authored, or edited by Cicely Fox Smith include:

- The City of Hope** (novel set in Alberta), Sidgwick & Jackson, London, UK, © 1914  
**Singing Sands** (novel set in Victoria, BC), Hodder & Stoughton, London, UK, © 1918  
**Peregrine in Love** (novel set in Victoria, BC), Hodder & Stoughton, London, UK, © 1920  
**Sailor Town Days**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1923  
**A Book of Famous Ships**, Houghton Mifflin, New York, US, © 1924  
**The Return of The *Cutty Sark***, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1924  
**Ship Alley: More Sailor Town Days**, Houghton Mifflin, New York, US, © 1925  
**Tales of The Clipper Ships**, Houghton Mifflin, New York, US, © 1926  
**A Book of Shanties** (traditional sea songs), Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1927  
**A Sea Chest: An Anthology of Ships and Sailormen**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1927

**Ancient Mariners**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1928  
**There Was a Ship: Chapters from the History of Sail**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1929  
**Ocean Racers**, Philip Allan, London, UK, © 1931  
**True Tales of The Sea**, Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1932  
**Anchor Lane**, Methuen & Co., London, UK, © 1933  
**Peacock Pride** (with Madge S. Smith), Frederick Muller, London, UK, © 1934  
**Adventures & Perils**, Michael Joseph, London, UK, © 1936  
**Three Girls in a Boat** (with Madge S. Smith), Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1938  
**All The Way Round: Sea Roads to Africa** (travel), Michael Joseph, London, UK, © 1938  
**The Ship Aground: A Tale of Adventure**, Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1940, 1942, 1958  
**The Voyage of The *Trevesa's* Boats**, Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1940  
**The Story of Grace Darling** (biography), Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1940  
**Thames Side Yesterdays**, F. Lewis, Publishers, Ltd., Leigh-on-Sea, UK, © 1945  
**Painted Ports** (with Madge S. Smith), Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1948, 1965  
**Knave-Go-By: The Adventures of Jacky Nameless** (with Madge S. Smith), Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1951  
**Seldom Seen** (with Madge S. Smith), Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1954  
**The Valiant Sailor** (with Madge S. Smith), Oxford University Press, London, UK, © 1951, 1955, 1959)



*Furling the Mainsail* by Anton Otto Fischer from **Anton Otto Fischer: Marine Artist**, edited by Katrina Sigsbee Fisher, published by Mill Hill Press, Nantucket, Massachusetts, USA, © 1984, p. 163

## Cicely Fox Smith Reviews (1914-1931)

### *Spectator*

"No one, not even Mr. Mansfield, has written finer sea ballads or come closer to the heart of those who go down to the great waters. In any anthology of the sea Miss Fox Smith's *Ballad of the Matterhorn*, *Bill the Dreamer*, *The Last of the Sealing Fleet* and *Rathlin Head* must occupy a high place."

### *Times*

"It is not likely that many lovers of sea-songs have missed the voice of Miss Fox Smith, but if they do not know her **Songs in Sail** let them read **Sailor Town** – the dancing colours and fresh scents of the harbour, the rush of the sea and wind, the cheery pathos of the outward-bound, the sailor's homesickness – all this is carried on the rhythm of her verses with a vividness hardly equaled by any other verse writer of the day."

### *Spectator*

"Miss Fox Smith is one of the few people living who can write a real 'chanty' combining a mastery of sea-lingo with perfect command of sea rhythms."

### *Times*

"These are the right stuff."

### *Evening Standard*

"Ballads and songs of the war, reeking of spindrift and spume, breezy and direct as those who go down to the sea in ships."

### *Nautical Magazine*

"Mr. C. Fox Smith must be congratulated on his dainty little volume of poems, **The Naval Crown**. We remember how well we enjoyed the author's **Sailor Town** and can say that the enjoyment and high opinion we then formed of the author have been in no way lessened by the present volume."

### *Navy*

"The writer's vocabulary of sea phrases is striking and characteristic; the technicalities proclaim a real sea lover, and the tone and colour are only excelled by the lilt of the verses."

### *Times*

"Miss C. Fox Smith's naval verse ... shows here, as in her former collection, her exceptional *métier* for apt metrical celebration of the spirit, the humour of the pathos of war and of the fighting man."

### *Syren*

"An excellent little collection of ballads referring to various phases of the war, some of which our readers have doubtless made the acquaintance of in the pages of **Punch**. The *Rhyme of the Inisfail* ... is the gem, and an excellent one, of the collection. The author has a capital vein of humour."

### *Manchester City News*

"The sea songs have the breath and the sound and the motion of the waters in them."

### *Joseph Conrad*

"In her I verily believe the quintessence of the collective soul of the latter-day seaman has found its last resting-place, and a poignant voice before taking its flight for ever from the earth."

### **Punch Magazine**

"**Small Craft** ... contains several poems that have appeared in **Punch** over the initials 'C.F.S.' They should receive a fresh welcome from all who share her understanding of the ways of seafaring men, and from the larger public that is beginning to appreciate the gallantry and devotion of our Merchant Service."

### **Punch Magazine**

"Those who appreciate Miss C. Fox Smith's familiarity with the ways and moods of sailormen and her flair for the true sea-tang will welcome the new collection of poems which she has brought out under the title, **Ships and Folks** . . . Most of these verses have appeared in **Punch**, and no further commendation is here needed."



From cover of **Punch Almanack**, January-June, Volume 160, 1921

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Drawn by Charles Pears from **Salt-Water Poems and Ballads**, by John Masefield,  
published by The Macmillan Co., New York, US, © 1921, facing p. 90.

# To Order a Recording of These Songs


Four recordings by the author are currently available with renditions of the songs in this songbook.

### Uncommon Sailor Songs

1 West Indies Blues	3:00
2 Flying Fish Sailor	3:52
3 Christmas at Sea	4:20
4 Windlass Chanty	1:58
5 Outward Bound	2:30
6 Yangtze River Shanty	2:54
7 Shanghai Passage	5:30
8 Hell's Pavement	2:23
9 Limehouse Reach	1:51
10 Mariner's Compass	3:18
11 Widgery Wharf	3:52
12 Wake Up Susiana	3:00
13 Swabbing Days Are Gone	3:12
14 Pearl Diver	1:48
15 Cowardly Act	2:38
16 Wreckers' Song	3:26
17 Freedom Schooner <i>Amistad</i>	4:13
18 Port o' Dreams	4:29
19 Mariquita	4:23
20 Pastures of Memories	4:11

Total Time: 67:08

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**Charlie Ipcar**


Here you have a wondrous collection of old songs and poems, all having to do with sailors and the sea. You'll hear of the tall-ship voyages, the perils of a lee shore, the shoals of sailortown, the death of a pearl diver, the sinking of a trawler by a cow, the work of the wreckers, and some old shellback reminiscing. Where there were gaps in the traditional sea songs record, I have strived to fill them by setting older nautical poems to music or by composing new songs. Songs are either acapella or accompanied with 5-string banjo or Anglo concertina.

### More Uncommon Sailor Songs

1 Rio Grande	3:34
2 Lee Fore Brace	3:59
3 Lumber	3:06
4 Hastings Mill	3:21
5 Old Fiddle	7:00
6 Haul Away the Nets	2:51
7 Capt. Bailey's Mistake	3:53
8 Dead Dog Cider	4:02
9 Pirates' Own Song	2:10
10 Rodent Mariners	3:16
11 Old She-Crab	2:26
12 Dr. Dogbody's Leg	6:17
13 Anderson's Coast	5:45
14 Rosario	2:54
15 Pacific Coast	4:53
16 So Long (All Coiled Down)	3:30

Total Time: 63:59

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**Charlie Ipcar at the Loaded Dog**


Here you have another wondrous collection of old songs and poems, and some new songs, most having to do with sailors and the sea. You'll roll down to Rio, hear the perils of rounding Cape Horn, load lumber in the Pacific NW, chorus with pirates, experience the Twilight Zone of the nautical junk shop, be amazed by the tales of Dr. Dogbody's leg and the escape of the old She-Crab, be saddened by the demise of old Bendigo, and much much more! Many of these songs are based on poems by Cicely Fox Smith that I have adapted for singing. Others are my original creation or borrowed from friends. Songs are either acapella or accompanied with 5-string banjo or Anglo concertina, and guitar.

### Old Sailor-Poets Sea Songs

1 Bound Away	3:36
2 A Pier-Head Chorus	3:06
3 Taiman Bunter	2:49
4 The Charities of the Cook	2:51
5 Sea Cook	3:54
6 Merchants Island	3:08
7 The Tattooed Lady (Foxtro)	5:48
8 Bumboats	3:03
9 The Salvage Men	3:26
10 A Ballad of John Silver	3:39
11 Neptune's Daughter	3:51
12 Sailor Town	5:16
13 Shipmates (1914)	4:13
14 A Ship in a Bottle	4:33
15 Sea Dreams	4:22
16 Mid-Watches	3:48
17 The Long Road Home	3:15

Total Time: 65:44

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**Charlie Ipcar at the Mystic Sea Music Festival**


Most of these songs are ones I've adapted for singing from sailor-poets from around the turn of the 19th century. Others are either original or adapted from old poems by other singers. There are songs of ships outward bound, ocean perils, the sea cooks, a tattooed lady, bumboatsmen, wreckers, pirates, female sailors, shipmates, nautical nostalgia, sea dreams, and the long sea road home. Most of these songs have a good chorus or refrain and would certainly benefit from other singers accompanying them. My wife Judy Barrows has kindly provided some back-up harmonies, and I've provided some cloned harmony. The songs are accompanied with 5-string banjo or Anglo concertina, and/or Judy's guitar. I would hope that many of these songs would be of interest to other nautical singers.

### Sailortown Days Sea Songs

1 Sea Traders	3:42
2 Mobile Bay	3:50
3 Tramps (Coaling Shanty)	3:27
4 Auckland to the Bluff	3:36
5 Ballad of the Old Navy	3:16
6 News in Daly's Bar	8:32
7 Old Pagoda Anchorage	4:12
8 Frederick's of Wooloomooloo	3:02
9 Concrete and Glass	3:56
10 Traveller	3:51
11 Wreck of the <i>Lady Washington</i>	3:48
12 Sailor's Farewell	3:40
13 Mother Carey	2:15
14 Outside Track	5:18
15 Leave her Johnnie	3:45
16 Evening Shadows Fall	4:36

Total Time: 66:01

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**Charlie Ipcar at C. Fox Smith Workshop Mystic Sea Music Festival 2008**

Many of these songs are drawn from the sailor's experience while ashore in the waterfront area described as "Sailortown". Other songs describe experiences at sea, the good and the bad. Some of these songs are ones that I've adapted for singing based on old nautical poems by Cicely Fox Smith, John Masfield and Burt Franklin Jenness. There are also new songs composed by contemporary sea music singers. The final song, one of mine, has nothing to do with the sea but is a nice one to close with. My wife Judy Barrows has kindly provided some back-up harmonies, and I've provided some cloned harmony. The songs are accompanied with 5-string banjo, autoharp or Anglo concertina, and/or Judy's guitar. I would hope that many of these songs would be of interest to other nautical singers.

Each recording may be purchased for \$15, postage and handling included, by making out a check payable to Charles Ipcar and mailing it to 80 Main St., Richmond, ME, 04357. Other performers' recordings of C. Fox Smith's poems may be obtained by searching the internet with information provided in the Discography or by contacting the author at [www.charlieipcar.com](http://www.charlieipcar.com).

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*The nautical poems of Cicely Fox Smith earned her by the 1920's a reputation comparable to Rudyard Kipling and John Masefield. Few poets have so successfully described the last years of the Great Age of Sail from the point of view of the deep-water sailor. And yet her works gradually faded from view, only to be rediscovered by folk singers, beginning in 1989, and transformed into compelling songs.*

This songbook demonstrates how some of Smith's nautical poems have been successfully adapted for singing. Included are lyrics, musical notation, chords, and notes for each song. There are also references to most of the recordings that have been made of the included poems, as well as recordings of many of her other poems. In all some 70 poems have been set to music, with two dozen included in this songbook.

It is hoped that this songbook will help to restore Smith's reputation as one of the best nautical poets of the 20th century.



The Old Customs House in  
Victoria, British Columbia, 1874

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The author during research in  
Victoria, British Columbia, 2005

Charles Ipcar is a singer of traditional and contemporary sea music who has toured from coast to coast in the States as well as in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Ipcar has also been featured as a solo performer and workshop leader at the prestigious Mystic Sea Music Festival in Connecticut, and has performed with his band Roll & Go at that same Festival.

He is professionally trained as an Urban Geographer, with a Ph.D. from Michigan State University. He has also taught geography as a Peace Corps volunteer in the secondary schools of Ethiopia.

Ipcar's interest in the nautical poems of Cicely Fox Smith was triggered by a concert featuring Danny and Joyce McLeod in 2000. Since then he and his co-editor Jim Saville from the United Kingdom have posted 624 of Smith's poems on the Oldpoetry Website where they are now freely available to the public for the first time in decades. Ipcar has also adapted poems for singing by John Masefield, Burt Franklin Jenness, William McFee, Edwin C. Brady, and Harry Kemp.

He resides with his wife Judy, along with their two cats, in the Kennebec River town of Richmond, Maine.