

Jeanie Johnston:
Ten Days Before the Mast,
Charleston to Washington, DC

by
Llewellyn Toulmin ©2003
(Sung to the tune of "Fiddler's Green")

Our Captain Michael has hair of pure white.
On *Asgard* and *Jeanie*, he likes things done right.
He has 42 years of sailin' the sea,
So we'll get to Washington -- probably!

Chorus:

Wrap me up in me oilskins and jumper,
No more on the docks I'll be seen,
Just tell me old shipmates, I'm taking a trip mates,
And I'll see them someday in Fiddler's Green

The Bosun Tom Harding, he loves a good fight,
And he'll drink and he'll swear well into the night.
He knows our ship from the keel to the truck,
And his favorite phrase is, "I don't give a f***!"

Oh Mani Sherwin's a powerful man,
Cross him at all, you'll be cleaning the can.
With energy Manic and facts all so true,
He'll soon be the Captain of -- *QE2*!

Dear Alice, Watch Leader, has a sweet smile,
And nothing at sea can her rile.
But whinging and whining she cannot abide,
So she sweetly pushed her watch -- o'er the side.

Frida the Strong can row a big oar
In Charleston the locals, they heard her fierce roar
They bet to outrow her and thus get her goat,
Instead they lost -- their most valuable boat!

Lou our cook is Iron Chef of the sea,
And all her good food, it tastes twice good to me.
For all of her cooking I eat up with pride,
And I taste it again as it goes o'er the side!

Our Oonagh the Red, she rules from on high
That wild tribe of Paddies they call IFI.
She whips them and kicks them and lashes their tails,
And gets them to move, even faster than -- snails.

Dear Denis my bunkmate, he loves to sleep.
When workers are called for, he makes not a peep.
I thought in my cabin I heard a storm's roar.
It turned out to be -- just one Denis snore.

Patrick the lad, he is tall, straight (?) and slim,
He's our dark version of the movie's Lord Jim.
Is he duke? Or earl? But the way he does preen,
We'll have to crown him -- our *Johnston* Queen!

The fair maid Michelle drives the ship like a witch,
And the shirt on her back says, "I'm the Queen Bitch!"
But she really wants to change all her life,
And settle her down as a submissive wife.

Brona the Small had a fear of the heights
And they haunted her dreams all of her nights.
But aboard *Jeanie* she climbed up the mast
And now all her fears -- they're in the past.

V.C. Hal Barstow has been 'round Cape Horn,
On eight square-riggers he's woke ninety-nine morns.
He makes his home out west in L.A.,
He's the one paying passenger -- who really did pay.

Well I am the author, of this poem so light
I climbed to the royals, shaking with fright
I scrubbed and stood watch, and I reefed and I steered
And I'd love to return, though it sounds weird!

So that is the tale of our ship and our crew,
Like Fiddler's Green, it's half-myth, half-true.
Come along for the ride, 'neath the sails and the sun,
And all we can promise, is much work -- and fun!

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