

NIKU BOAT SONG

trad., as the "Mingulay Boat Song"

amendments & expansion by Lew Toulmin, July 2017 on the TIGHAR Amelia Earhart Expedition to Nikumaroro;

Mingulay is a small island off the west coast of Scotland, now uninhabited.

"Niku" is a small island in the Republic of Kiribati, now uninhabited.

What care we, how white the sea is?

What care we now for wind or weather?

For we know now that the key is

To sail her closer to Niku bay.

Mothers holdin,' babies cryin'

Dawn and dusk now they are sighin'

They are prayin' that we're stayin'

On a home course for Niku bay.

Chorus:

So heave ya ho, boys; let her go, boys;

Turn her head round, into the weather,

Heave ya ho, boys, let her go, boys

Sailin' her homeward to Niku bay.

Crabs and fresh ponds, sand & palm fronds,

Terns and boobies, they love our cay,

Though we may roam, 'cross the far foam,

We shall return home, to Niku bay.

Wives are waiting, on the banks, or

Gazing seaward, all their day;

Turn her 'round, boys, and we'll anchor

Where the sun sets on Niku bay.

Longer, longer shall I tarry,

Where our hearts are both blithe and merry.

Turn her 'round boys, and she'll carry

Hearts to hearth, home and Niku bay.