

THE DRUNKEN CAPTAIN

Performed by: Dermot Roche

In the stream of cancer¹ our good ship lay,
Our drunken captain went on a spree;
He came onboard and to us did say,
'Get your anchor ready and we'll go to sea.'

We got her ready by his command,
The wind blew free as we left the land;
We left Cape Pine all on her lee,
And swung her off in a heavy sea.

Down came the storm from the angry sky,
Our good ship plunged, but she could not rise;
We asked our captain to shorten sail,
Or we'd all be lost in a heavy gale.

He wrang his hands and he tore his hair,
Saying, 'Whilst I'm captain, you need not fear,'
Saying, 'While I'm captain, I'll never fail,
To shoot the first man that touches sail.'

Then up speaks one of our noble band,
Saying, 'There's twelve of us on her deck to stand,
We will reef her down if the wind still blow,
If you interfere, you'll be tied below.'

We reefed her down against his will,
Our good ship sailed as her sails do fill;
We are heading up for the Cape light now,
And she splits the white foam from her bow.

Homeward bound in a deep distress,
Like a white seagull, she goes seeks her nest;
When I gets onshore, no more I'll sail,
With a drunken captain in a heavy gale.

¹ *Editor's note: 'Stream of cancer' is likely a corruption of 'Straight of Canso.'*