

Wellerman

Sea ballad from New Zealand (1860-70)

Verse 1:

Am
There once was a ship that put to sea
Dm Am
And the name of the ship was the Billy of Tea
Am
The winds blew hard, her bow dipped down
E7 Am
O blow, my bully boys, blow

Verse 2:

Am
She had not been two weeks from shore
Dm Am
When down on her a right whale bore
Am
The captain called all hands and swore
E7 Am
He'd take that whale in tow

Verse 3:

Am
Before the boat had hit the water
Dm Am
The whale's tail came up and caught her
Am
All hands to the side, harpooned & fought her
E7 Am
When she dived down below

Chorus:

F C
Soon may the Wellerman come
Dm Am
To bring us sugar and tea and rum
F C
One day, when the tonguin' is done,
Dm E7 Am
We'll take our leave and go

Verse 4:

Am
No line was cut, no whale was freed;
Dm Am
The Captain's mind was not of greed
Am
But he belonged to the whaleman's creed;
E7 Am
She took the ship in tow

Verse 5:

Am
For forty days, or even more
Dm Am
The line went slack, then tight once more
Am
All boats were lost -there were only four-
E7 Am
But still that whale did go

Verse 6:

Am
As far as I've heard, the fight's still on;
Dm Am
The line's not cut and the whale's not gone
Am
The Wellerman makes his regular call
Am E7 Am
To encourage the Captain, crew, and all