

Greenland Whaling Fishery (South Ronaldsay version)

Traditional

In eighteen hundred and forty four
On March the twentieth day
We hoisted a flag to our foretop mast
And for Greenland sailed away, brave boys
And for Greenland sailed away

Our captain walking the quarterdeck
With spyglass in his hand
A whale, a whale, a whale fish he cries
And she blows at every span, brave boys
And she blows at every span

Overhaul, overhaul, let your davit tackles fall
And launch your boats for sea
With the line coilers and jolly jack o' tars
And away to the fish we'll go, brave boys
And away to the fish we'll go

The whale been struck and the line played out
She made a great flurry with her tail
The boat capsized, five men were lost
And a nice little apprentice boy, brave boys
And a nice little apprentice boy

Sad news, sad news to our captain came
Which grieved his heart full sore
At the losing of the poor apprentice boy
But the whale grieved him ten times more, brave boys
But the whale grieved him ten times more

It is time to leave this cold country now
And from Greenland sail away
With the hail and the snow and the whale fishes blow
And the daylight is never done, brave boys
And the daylight is never done
And the daylight is never done

The song is 'traditional' because, as yet, there is no record of who wrote it