

So Merry, So Merry Are We

As sung by
Noble Brown
11-17-1946 Millsville, WI

Handwritten musical score on yellowed paper. The score is written on five-line staves with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes a key signature change to one flat (Bb) for the second line, indicated by a '371' and '(Sea song)'. The lyrics are: 'so merry so merry so merry are we There is no one more merry than the sailor on sea Oh I dare say, I do say, as we sail a-long give a sail or his grog but no salt meat too strong.'

Verse 1.

So merry, so merry, so merry are we,
There is no one more merry than the sailor on sea.
Oh I dare say, I do say, as we sail along
Give a sailor his grog but no salt meat too strong.

Verse 2.

We're pulling, we're hauling, and heaving away
In all kinds of weather, by night and by day.
Oh I can say, I will say, as we sail along
Give a sailor his grog and he won't think it wrong.

Verse 3.

Tho' blowing or snowing the elements wild
A sailor on duty is cheerful and mild.
Oh I still say, I must say, as we sail along,
That a good glass of rum and a good shanty song.

Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.

Critical Commentary

Transcription by Peters, p. 106.

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:

Sung by Noble B. Brown, age 61, Millsville, 1946.

Editor's notes:

This song is similar to the chorus of the "Alphabet Song" in Beck's and Fowke's collections.

Alternate titles/related songs: "Alphabet Song."

Sources:

Beck, Earl Clifton. *Songs of the Michigan Lumberjacks*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1942. "Alphabet Song," shantyboy version.

Fowke, Edith. *Lumbering Songs from the Northern Woods*. Transcriptions by Norman Cazden. Published for the American Folklore Society. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970. "Alphabet Song."

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

K.G.