

HOME TO OYSTER BAY

Unison, optional Two-Part, accompanied

Words and Music by
THOMAS ELIAS SUGAR

BriLee Music
the Voice of Choral Music

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Range:



Time: Approx. 2:02

*Difficulty: Moderate

Performance Notes

Shanties were songs sung by sailors to the rhythm of their work. The tempos varied from relaxed to rapid depending upon the demands of the task at hand. The “Shanty Man,” was one of the few sailors who actually led the men in the singing and they were hired on especially for this talent. Long whaling voyages with many unimaginable days fighting each whale, followed immediately by demanding days of processing the catch required a few crew leaders that were especially talented at motivating through song. These “Shanty Men” as they were known, were not only able to draw from an extensive catalog of period songs for the differing jobs on board, but would also compose ship specific melodies. To sum up the research involved as this piece evolved, much time was spent in *The Oyster Bay Library* exploring the period of these wooden sailing ships. The life of a sailor became the inspiration for a few trips to Mystic Seaport in Connecticut and a developing passion for information on the subject. The lyrics of the song are a chronicle of the cyclical nature of the commercial sailors of the mid-1800's and are true to the actual chores and sequential duties of the whaling and fishing industry that was central to the culture of the north shore of Long Island during that period of history. Now, the lines, “The scent of land or a hearth and home, and nary a wife for me. A shanty man, I’m never alone. The sea is me wife, you see.” draw upon the idea that a seasoned sailor after months at sea, could smell land before it was sighted, so this shanty man, while never having the pleasure of a traditional landlubber existence with the requisite house, hearth and white picket fence, and certainly not a wife to complete the scene, will nonetheless never be alone, because as a true Shanty Man, he is so integral to life on board and the success of the venture, that he is basically married to the sea! The creaking (and anthropomorphic groaning) of the wooden ship was often referred to as the ship crying out and straining against the elements. The twist to the words, “calling me home” is that one might normally think that the dreary conditions would cause a sailor to yearn for the return to his home port, and for many a sailor that might have been the case, but the noisy ship is reminding this shanty man that of course, he is at home on his ship at sea.

Thomas Elias Sugar

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A lively Sea Chanty (♩ = 92)

mf

The piano introduction consists of two staves in 6/8 time. The right hand plays a melody of eighth notes and chords, while the left hand provides a simple harmonic accompaniment with dotted half notes.

7

The piano accompaniment for measures 5-8 continues the harmonic support, with the right hand playing chords and eighth notes, and the left hand playing dotted half notes.

I
II
(opt.)

unis. *mf* 11

We work all day and we're sing-ing a song, to

mf

The vocal part (I and II) enters at measure 11 with the lyrics "We work all day and we're sing-ing a song, to". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and eighth notes.

15

pass the time a - way. So turn the glass and call out the hour. It's

The vocal part continues with the lyrics "pass the time a - way. So turn the glass and call out the hour. It's". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and eighth notes.

19

time that we spend our pay. So we stow our catch and lash the boats, then

23

men, we'll call it a day. We work all day and we're sing-ing a song, then

home to Oy - ster Bay. The

mp

29

scent of land or a hearth and home, and nar - y a wife for me. A

33 *mf*

Shan - ty man, I'm nev - er a - lone. The sea is me wife, you see. So we

37

swab the decks and clear the rime, then men, we'll call it a day. We

41

work all day and we're sing - ing a song, then home to Oy - ster Bay.

45

49

Maestoso (♩ = 84)

f

55

I

Well the sea was an-gry that day, my friend.

II (opt.)

Well the sea was an - gry.

Maestoso (♩ = 84)

55

f

59

Sound the bells as she rolls. Stand the watch as she creaks and groans,

There she blows. Stand the watch as she creaks and groans,

59

63 A tempo (♩ = 92)

rit. *mf*

cry-ing and call-ing me home. We play all night and we're sing-ing a song, with

rit. *mf*

cry-ing and call-ing me home. We ho, heave ho. Yo

rit. *mf*

63 A tempo (♩ = 92)

rit. *mf*

not much more to say. So turn the glass and call it a night. It's

rit. *mf*

ho, heave ho. Yo ho, heave ho. Yo

rit. *mf*

67

rit. *mf*

time we were un - der way. So we'll hoist the sails and trim the sheets, then

rit. *mf*

ho, heave ho. So we'll tell the tales and

rit. *mf*

67

rit. *mf*

time we were un - der way. So we'll hoist the sails and trim the sheets, then

rit. *mf*

ho, heave ho. So we'll tell the tales and

rit. *mf*

71

rit. *mf*

time we were un - der way. So we'll hoist the sails and trim the sheets, then

rit. *mf*

ho, heave ho. So we'll tell the tales and

rit. *mf*

71

rit. *mf*

time we were un - der way. So we'll hoist the sails and trim the sheets, then

rit. *mf*

ho, heave ho. So we'll tell the tales and

rit. *mf*

75

cast our nets in the waves. We work all day and we're sing-ing a song, then
 sail a - way. We work all day and we're sing ing a song, then

75

f [79] *rit.*
 home to Oy - ster Bay. We'll work all day, we'll be sing-ing a song. To -
f rit.
 home to Oy - ster Bay. We'll work all day, we'll be sing-ing a song. To -

a tempo

I
 II
 mor-row's an-oth - er day.

a tempo

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