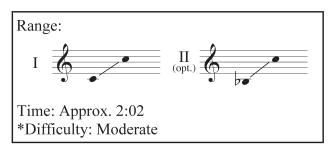
Brilee Music

HOME TO OYSTER BAY

Unison, optional Two-Part, accompanied

Words and Music by THOMAS ELIAS SUGAR





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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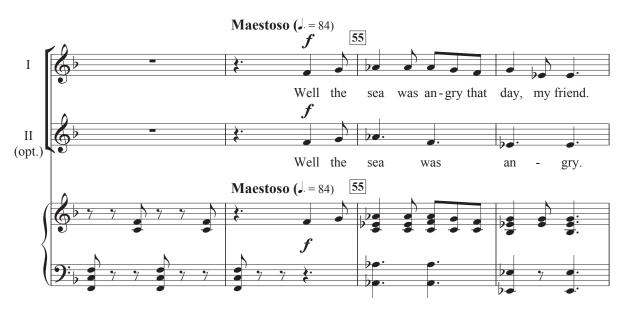
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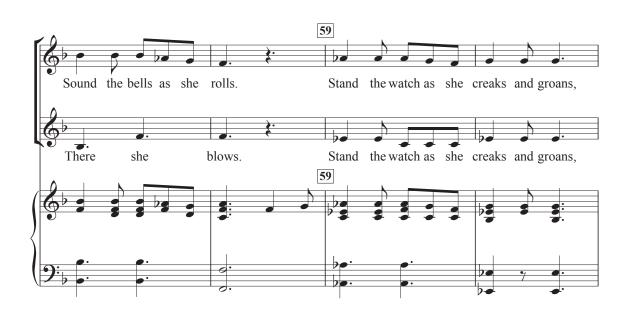


















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