

## The Bonny Ship the Diamond

A Scottish whaling song written in the late 1820s and first recorded by Ewan McColl in 1957 (LP: Thar She Blows). Over-fishing in the Greenland sea during the early 19th century had a devastating toll on the whale stocks. A new hunting ground, the South-West Fishery, was discovered in the region of the Davis Straits and it was mostly here that The Diamond fished.

The Diamond is a ship, my lads  
For the Davis Strait we're bound  
The quay it is all garnish-ed  
With bonnie lasses 'round  
Captain Thompson gives the order  
To sail the ocean wide  
Where the sun it never sets, my lads  
Nor darkness dims the sky.

### Chorus

*And it's cheer up my lads  
Let your hearts never fail  
When the bonnie ship the Diamond  
Goes a-fishing for the whale*

Along the quay at Peterhead  
The lasses stand aroon  
Wi' their shawls all pulled around them  
And the salt tears runnin' doon  
Now don't you weep, my bonnie lass  
Though you be left behind  
For the rose will bloom on Greenland's ice  
Before we change our mind

<more>

Here's a health to the Resolution  
Likewise the Eliza Swan  
Three cheers for the Battler of Montrose  
And the Diamond, ship of fame  
We wear the trousers o' the white  
The jackets o' the blue  
When we get back to Peterhead  
We'll have sweethearts enou'

It will be bright both day and night  
When the whaling lads come hame  
In a ship that's full of oil, my lads  
And money to our name  
We'll make the cradles for to rock  
And the blankets for to tear  
And every lass in Peterhead sings  
"Hushabye, my dear"

<Chorus x 2>

In 1830, a few years after this rollicking song was made up, The Diamond, Eliza Swan and The Resolution along with seventeen other whaling ships were caught in the pack ice of Melville Bay. Most ships were wrecked and many sailors lost their lives. The Eliza Swan was among those that got free and brought the sad news home.

