

ON BOARD A NINETY-EIGHT

#49

When I was young and scarce eighteen, I drove a roaring trade.
And many a sly trick I have played with many a pretty maid.
My parents found that would not do: I soon would spend their store.
So they resolved that I should go on board a Man-O-War.

A bold Press Gang surrounded me, their Warrant they did show
And swore that I should go to sea and face the daring foe.
So off they lugged me to the boat. Oh! How I cursed my fate;
'Twas then I found that I must float on board a Ninety-Eight.

When first I put my foot on board, how I began to stare;
Our Admiral he gave the word, "There is no time to spare".
They weighed the anchor, shook out sail and off they bore me straight
To watch the foe in storm and gale on board a Ninety-Eight.

Before we reached *Americay*, they gave me many drill;
They soon learnt me a nimble way to hand an iron pill.
In course of time a fight began when bold Jack Tars laid straight.
What would I give if I could run from on board a Ninety-Eight.

But as time fled I bolder grew and hardened was to war.
I'd run aloft with my ship's crew and valued not a scar.
So well did I my duty do I soon made Bosun's Mate,
And damne soon got Bosun too on board a Ninety-Eight.

So years rolled by; at Tra-fal-gar bold Nelson fought and fell;
As they capsized that hardy tar I caught a rap as well.
To Greenwich College I came back because I saved my pate;
They only knocked one wing off Jack on board a Ninety-Eight.

So now my cocoa I can take; my pouch with bacca stored;
With my blue clothes and three-cocked hat I'm happy as a Lord.
I've done my duty, served my King, and now I bless my fate;
But damne, I'm too old to sing; I'm nearly ninety eight!