

Ridgastan

by Patrick Dennis Woods

You landsmen all
One you I call
You gallant seamen too
Whilst I relate the dismal fate
Of one of our noble crew
John Smith, by name
from England came,
The son of a noble man
For to cross the sea
To Moreton Bay
On board the Ridgastan

His father paid a handsome sum
To the owners of the ship
For to learn his navigation
This was his second trip
He did his duty manfully
He could go aloft like one
Who served his time
One the Black Ball Line
Though been on the Ridgastan

In thirty south latitude
West longitude sixteen
While doing good eight knots and more
In a steady north west breeze
While going on so cheerfully
As you might understand
We little thought
Misfortune was so near the Ridgastan

Six of our good ship's company
Were on the main top yard
And one of them was little John
Which makes my heart feel sad
The runner broke on which he stood
High power it did command
That that brave boy
Should lose his life
From off the Ridgastan

He struck the rigging as he fell
Into the ocean foam
Which unabled him from keeping up
Till the life-buoys out were thrown
Brave Dixon threw the life-buoy
But threw it all in vain
Poor John had sunk
No more to rise
From off the Ridgastan

The sailors mid confusion
Threw the ship round to the wind
And lowered down the life boat
In hopes his corpse to find
Six of the crew did volunteer
The lifeboat for to man
And dash away throught heavy seas
From off the Ridgastan

The passengers on board the ship
Did gaze with steady eye
On the movements of the lifeboat
As she rowed low and high
The search proved unsuccessful
They took the lifeboat in
They found the cap, but not the corpse
Of the much beloved John

For to describe this awful scene
In reality I fail
The smile had fled
The joke had ceased
Each cheek was wet and pale
We set out sails, we steered again
And the Captain gave command
And soon we left that darling boy
Astern of the Ridgastan

Oh pity his dear parents
When the sad news was sent home
to think that in the deep blue sea
Lies buried their dear son
Oh they had dreamed of such a dream
He never should have gone
For to seek promotion on the seas
On board the Ridgastan