

## Channels

Words - Micca Patterson (*deceased*)

Tune - Kelly

The wind is from the South-West, boys, blows maybe 5 or 6  
 And the waves are sliding smoothly as they run  
 And under all plain sail we're making 8 good knots  
 As we make our way up Channel in the sun  
 It is cold early December and we're finally going home  
 Back to where the water is not blue but green  
 And the leaves have changed from orange and fallen from the trees  
 And I hope once more in my own bed to dream

It's a week short of a twelvemonth since we went upon our way  
 Down the Channel, outward bound for foreign shores  
 Into seas as warm as blood and black velvet starlit nights  
 And the scurvy, rats and damned salt-water sores  
 We have been down to Australia, and Vallipo round the Horn  
 And from there to Foochow for a load of tea  
 And now we're bound up Channel and our voyage nearly done  
 London River's open wide to welcome me

We Square up at the Lizard then a little East North East  
 Until Portland comes up on the Port hand side  
 Then we for St Catherines, Beachy Head  
 Then its sharp port through the Downs to catch the tide  
 We're at Southend, we're at Gravesend then we're entering Long Reach  
 Then off Stone House Point it all seems a little slow  
 Then just as we pass Greenwich a little donkey tug  
 Drops a line to us and takes us all in tow

So we bunt and Furl up nicely and we make a harbour stow  
 Sharpline everything to show them what we're worth  
 Then the Mate yells from the wheelhouse "stand by Fore and aft"  
 As we're gently eased at last into our berth  
 Then its at the Pay off table with your discharge book to stamp  
 And your Grip and Duffle bag in your right hand  
 And your oilies in a bundle tied in gantline that was spare  
 Then you once again step carefully onto land

Home to England, wives and Children, that are changed before our eyes  
 And your home changed as well and not the same  
 some places that are missing and some faces dead and gone  
 your a stranger and your kids don't know your name  
 for time has marched onwards while we sailed so far away  
 In our time spent in wood prison, but you see  
 For a week or three we settle then our salty mistress calls  
 we all will sign on again and back to sea