



ABOARD THE CHARLES W MORGAN

I worked at Mystic Seaport, for a year or two,
aboard the whaleship Morgan, the mission to renew.
Many say the ship has ghosts, of that you should not doubt.
All alone in the bottom hold, one day the lights went out.

I stood there in the darkness, the hold was black as night.
I knew there was just one way out and it was not in sight.
I stumbled when I tried to walk, advancing in a crawl.
I feared I'd end up in the bilge - if I were to fall.

I realized I might not be found, twas Friday afternoon.
If I didn't want to spend the night, I'd have to get out soon.
I let out a mighty yell as I began to scare.
And very nearly soiled my pants when answered, "Who goes there?"

Motionless, I strained my eyes, still nothing did I see.
I sensed that there was someone there, a chill fell over me.
I heard the footsteps drawing near, the squeaking of the hatch.
Again he called out, "Who goes there?" and then he struck a match.

The light revealed a sailor, clad in 1800's garb.
He pulled my shirt with an old harpoon and hooked it with the barb.
Then looked at me and snarled, "In the name of Jonah, who are you?"
"Some call me the Salty Bard," I said, "How do you do?"

"So you're the Salty Bard!" he laughed, "The pleasure is all mine."
He lowered his harpoon and said, "I read you all the time.
We're all fans aboard this ship, but to me it most relates.
Follow me to the fo'c's'le now, you've got to meet my mates!"

I knew I wasn't dreaming, up the hatchway we did climb.
Could it be I'd met a whaler from another time?
I ducked in to the fo'c's'le, man, you should've seen my face.
Twenty sailors gathered there, splicing the mainbrace.

In the middle of the merriment there lay a sleeping dog.
The sailors danced around him as they passed around the grog.
One handed me a measure, I think that it was James.
They all introduced themselves, but I'm terrible with names.

Two sailors danced the hornpipe, and a fiddler played the tunes.
Another simply slapped his feet and kept the beat with spoons.
One was sitting on his bunk ignoring all the hype,
writing in a diary and smoking a clay pipe.

I saw an old scrimshander; he was working on his craft.
I asked him how much time he'd spent, he looked at me and laughed.
"Time is like an empty page you have to fill," said he.
"And God knows that there's plenty of time when sailing on the sea."

They really were a jolly crew, they didn't have a care.
People come and people go, never knowing they are there.
I asked them why they stayed aboard, did they miss the hunt for whales?
No, they said, twas the sea they missed, and handling the sails.

I knew that it was getting late and bid them all farewell.
They'll stay another hundred years as far as I can tell.
So give the devil his due, my friends, these are true seamen.
Rest assured they'll be aboard, when the Morgan sails again.