

Fairport Convention, Sir William Gower

I am a sailor, both stout and strong
To a goodly vessel I do belong
Well guard and anchored and well equipped
Sir William Gower and a very fine ship
Our captain in his cabin lay
When a dreadful voice to him did say
"This night with me in the deep you'll be
So prepare yourself and your company"
The sky grew dark and the sea grew still
Though the men were fearful and the air was chill
Sir William rose to meet his men
Saying "Hear me now for I'll not speak again"
"I loved my mother when she was alive
And to my sister I gave babies five
I killed my wife and her children three
So I now must face what has come for me"
"You'll lash a timber close to my side
And throw me out on the water wide
And if I swim then let me be
But if I sink then pray for me"
So we tied his head and we tied his feet
And around his middle a winding sheet
At every knot the sea did stir
Grew ready for the murderer
And then we saw his open grave
The likeness of a single wave
That swept our ship from her stern to her bow
And bore away Sir William Gower