

# Elephants' Teeth

Peo- ple they calls us the long- shore men, we earns our liv- ing a-  
 long the sea shore, on what we picks up from a storm or two we can  
 live for a six- month or more. The  
 (chorus) We've  
 roofs of our farms are of good Welsh slate from the  
 picked up the coal and the good ca- li- co, we've  
 trad- er that ground- ed last year, the beams are made of the  
 res- cued the bus- cuits and beef, but what, my friends, are we  
 tim- ber frame of a short- sight- ed French priv- at- eer.  
 going to do with a shed- full of El- e- phants' teeth?

People they calls us the long-shore men,  
 We earns our living along the sea shore,  
 On what we picks up from a storm or two,  
 We can live for a six-month or more.  
 The roofs of our farms are of good Welsh slate,  
 From the trader that grounded last year,  
 And the beams are made of the timber frame  
 Of a short-sighted French privateer.

(Chorus)

*We've picked up the coal and the calico,  
 We've rescued the biscuits and beef,  
 But what, my friends, are we going to do  
 With a shed-full of elephants' teeth?*

Well, ships they comes and ships they goes,  
 Sometimes a ship is cast up at our door,  
 It's a tragedy for the men of the sea  
 But a bonus for us of the shore  
 And sometimes a barrel will come to land,  
 It was lost, but now it's found,  
 Be it lamp-oil or brandy, it comes in handy,  
 It all helps the world to go round.

(Chorus)

They says we're poor and knows nothing at all  
 Of a gentrified life and what it's about,  
 But we drinks our brandy and smokes our cigars  
 And the salt helps to ward off the gout.

You might think the parson would rail about this,  
 And tell us to take it all back,  
 But he's too busy down at the church,  
 Admiring his ivory plaques.  
 (Chorus)

We've all got boats and we knows the ports  
 Where goods can be sold and no questions asked,  
 And to slip away with a tusk or two,  
 Well, it isn't a difficult task.  
 And the revenue men will be off home again,  
 And it can't be a moment too soon,  
 And each child born here for the next hundred years  
 Gets an ivory christening spoon.

(Chorus)



The ship *Shepton Mallet* ran aground near Port Eynon on Gower in 1730, with a cargo including about 200 ivory tusks. Customs officers sent from Swansea to rescue the cargo found it had largely vanished. After extensive searching they posted notices warning that anyone concealing these "Elephants' Teeth" would be duly dealt with, and finally recovered about 50. The rest of the teeth are out there somewhere.