

THE MASTERLESS MEN

Words & Music by Bob Watson

Narrative with feeling

Verse



They were serfs from the pas - tures of Eng - land and Ire - land,



Vic - tims of pov - er - ty, dri - ven to roam; They were tricked out to sea by the



lies of re - cruit - ers, On the deep wa - ter fish - ing fleets, far from their homes. Jumped



ship at New - found - land, too late they dis - covered They'd gone from the fry - ing pan



in - to the flame, They were prey to the mer - chants and slaves to the plan - ters, But



Chorus

yet as de - ser - ters they could not com - plain. They were known as the Ma - ster - less Men,



Cher - ished their free - dom no mat - ter how hard, And they swore that they'd ne - ver be



cap - tured a - gain, There'd be bon - dage no more for the Ma - ster - less Men.

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They were serfs from the pastures of England and Ireland,
Victims of poverty driven to roam;
They were tricked out to sea by the lies of recruiters,
On the deep water fishing fleets far from their homes.
Jumped ship at Newfoundland, too late they discovered
They'd gone from the frying pan into the flame:
They were prey to the merchants and slaves to the planters,
But yet as deserters they could not complain . . .

Chorus: They were known as the Masterless Men,
 Cherished their freedom, no matter how hard;
 And they swore that they'd never be captured again ---
 There'd be bondage no more for the Masterless Men.

To the desolate wilderness of the interior,
They made their escape to the timber and stone;
There, far from the reach of the ones who'd oppressed them,
This wild rugged country they made it their own.
From villages hidden so deep in the hillside,
There after a fashion, a living they made;
If hardship and danger's the price of your freedom,
By men with no choice it's already been paid.

Chorus

Like wolves in the night, they came out of the forest,
And robbed the rich planters who lived by the shore;
Then back to the wilds, where there's none dared to follow,
Down the dark secret footways they melted once more.
And girls from the coves and the far fishing stations,
Accustomed already to life in the raw,
Moved into the hills to be wives for wild husbands,
Continued the line with the children they bore

Chorus

To some they were heroes, to some they were villains,
Admired by the many and feared by the few,
And their blood's running still in the veins of Newfoundland,
Those Masterless Men that no one could subdue.
And it's well to remember when speaking of freedom,
To some it comes easy, for some it means war;
And liberty's song sounds the better for singing,
When treading the footsteps of those gone before.

Chorus