

## FITTER ON THE SHORE

(Dave Evardson)

When I was just a little lad  
For workin' folks, the times were bad,  
And jobs not easy to be had  
In Grimsby, Lincolnshire  
While still at school, Dad says to me:  
Will you tek a pleasure trip to sea  
Wi' your Uncle Alf, you know that he's  
A trawler engineer

The trawler engineer at sea  
The fitter on the shore  
For shame that we should never see  
Such craftsmen any more

How proud I was to mek that trip  
A crew of men & a trusty ship  
And when the third hand caught the whip  
To winch the cod-end clear  
The mate below untied the knot  
And the crew all cheered the prize they'd  
got  
But they never would have reached that spot  
Without their engineer

To be a fitter was me dream  
Enthralled to see the power of steam  
Mek man & steel a mighty team  
I'd found a course to steer  
My eagerness soon found reward  
I built a bike in our backyard  
Dad says: If you can graft that 'ard  
You'll mek an engineer

A store-lad first down on the docks  
At the counter I'd to use a box  
Just four foot seven in me socks  
And in me fifteenth year  
The first two years they quickly passed  
An apprentice fitter then at last  
So eager to be learnin' fast  
To be an engineer

I learned from masters of their trade  
To see no ship should be delayed  
And worked like hell to mek the grade  
As war was drawin' near  
Then I joined up & took me kit  
Like millions more I did me bit  
And when I came out I was fit  
To be an engineer

From steam we went to diesel oil  
In sleet & snow on deck you'd toil  
The down below where blood could boil  
The heat was that severe  
For trouble-shootin' men were we  
To get the trawlers back to sea  
While skippers scowled impatiently  
And blessed the engineer

A faulty pump, a lazy winch  
To raise the vacuum just an inch  
From dangers we must never flinch  
No situation fear  
Except to see our trade decline  
And idle trawlers moored in line  
That'll send a shiver down the spine  
Of any engineer

But at fifty-odd you've had your day  
And ruined your health for your lousy pay  
Then it's: Thank you Jack, now on your  
way  
It's time to pack your gear  
Far off those glorious days of steam  
As you sign for their retirement scheme  
Still proud that you fulfilled your dream  
To be an engineer