

THE WRECK OF THE HOWE

(Words: Albert Hutchinson; adapted & tune: D Evardson)

Key E, Capo 4th fret

 C G Am
One night on the rocks off Bear Island
 F Em Dm G
A trawler the Howe ran ashore
 F G Am
Pinioned on those cursed blinders
 D D7 G
To remain there a wreck evermore
 G7 C
No tugs in the world could have saved her
 F Em Dm G
Though one went his luck there to try
 F G E Am
And found her a wreck that was helpless
 F G C
Had to leave her laid there high & dry

Her skipper a man named McGregor
As brave as the brave known to be
Said: Now she's a wreck boys forever
But you'll still take orders from me
Our lives all depend on each other
Be cheerful & keep a good heart
For the sake of our wives & our families
Each one of us must play his part

But out in that dark Arctic winter
Imagine the plight of that crew
Their ship on the rocks off Bear Island
And nothing on earth they could do
Their sparks was a brave lad of twenty
A message for help he had sent
Thank God it was answered by plenty
And swiftly to her aid they went

They found her a wreck at the mercy
Of a sea that no words can describe
They couldn't get anywhere near her
Though time out of number they tried
On deck they could see the crew standing
And who could deny they were brave
Facing their deaths calm & steadfast
On the brink of a trawlerman's grave

So round to the lee of the island
Each vessel sent picked men ashore
To march across land that was barren
Untrodden by humans before
And God only knows all the hardships
They suffered on that awful trek
Hands, faces, feet were frost-bitten
Yet onwards they strove to that wreck

On board the Howe, one seaman, Harmer
A rope round his body they tied
To swim to a point that meant rescue
He failed but I praise him, he tried
When pulled back on board by his comrades
He lay on the deck at their feet
A hero if ever there was one
Near frozen & white as a sheet

But high on the rocks up above them
The search party bravely trudged on
They found them & brought off the rescue
And saved the whole crew every one
Those lads were brought back home to
Grimsby
And safely returned to the land
We don't know the half that they suffered
But we kid 'em on we understand

You lads who performed that brave rescue
And returned to your ships cold & numb
Your deeds might not go down in history
And are even forgotten by some
From a trawlerman's heart here's a tribute
To you and those lads you stood by
That night on the rocks off Bear Island
When you boldly looked Death in the eye