

Jerry the One-Legged Rigger

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By the time he was born he'd been twice round the horn,
For his Mam was his Dad's navigator,
He was born in the dark on an old Swansea barque
About thirty miles from the equator.
By the time he was three he'd spent four years at sea,
What he didn't know didn't figure,
Now his sailing is past, but he's still up the mast,
He's Jerry the one-legged rigger.

*Oh you may have a dock where you float round the clock,
And your ships may be faster and bigger,
But there's one thing we've got which we're sure that you've not,
That's Jerry the one-legged rigger.*

Now copper's our trade, in the Hafod it's made,
The ore comes from far away places,
So the sea's always glad of a strapping young lad,
Who knows how to haul the lee braces.
By the time he was ten Jerry'd sailed with the men,
On the *Gem* and the old *Ocean Beauty*,
It was always his boast to be first at his post
And foremost in doing his duty.

Well, the story's in baulk, because Jerry won't talk
Of just how his leg went a-missing,
Was it through work, from which he'd never shirk,
Or a fight over who he'd been kissing?
Or could it have been like a fellow I seen,
When we was in port making merry,
Took a swim for a lark, and got ate by a shark,
Well, perhaps that's what happened to Jerry.

When your ship's on the Strand and you've ale in your hand,
The sails in the locker are lying,
When it's time to put out, they give a great shout,
And that's when the riggers come flying.
They're an old stranded crew but they know what to do,
And they do it with skill and with vigour,
But the foremost of all, at the foot-rope or fall,
Is Jerry the one-legged rigger.

When there's ships to prepare, you'll see him up there,
His old ragged trouser-leg flapping,
And he hops to and fro, both aloft and alow,
To check out the rigging and wrapping.
When she puts out to sea, Jerry's left on the quay,
But you know that what e'er may betide her,
Come spring airs or late gales, Jerry's heart's in her sails,
And his thoughts on the ocean beside her.