

Spanish Ladies

1. Farewell and adieu to you fair Spanish ladies
 Farewell and adieu, you ladies of Spain,
 For we've received orders for to sail for
 old England
 But we hope in a short time to see you again.

**We'll rant and we'll roar like true
 British sailors
 We'll rant and we'll roar across
 the salt sea;
 Until we strike soundings in the Channel
 of Old Eng-I-and.
 From Ushant to Scilly is thirty-four
 leagues**

2. We hove our ship to with the wind at
 the sou'west,
 We hove our ship to, to take soundings clear.
 In fifty-five fathoms on a fine sandy bottom
 We clewed our main tops'ls and up channel
 did steer.

3. Now the first land we made was a point
 called the Deadman,

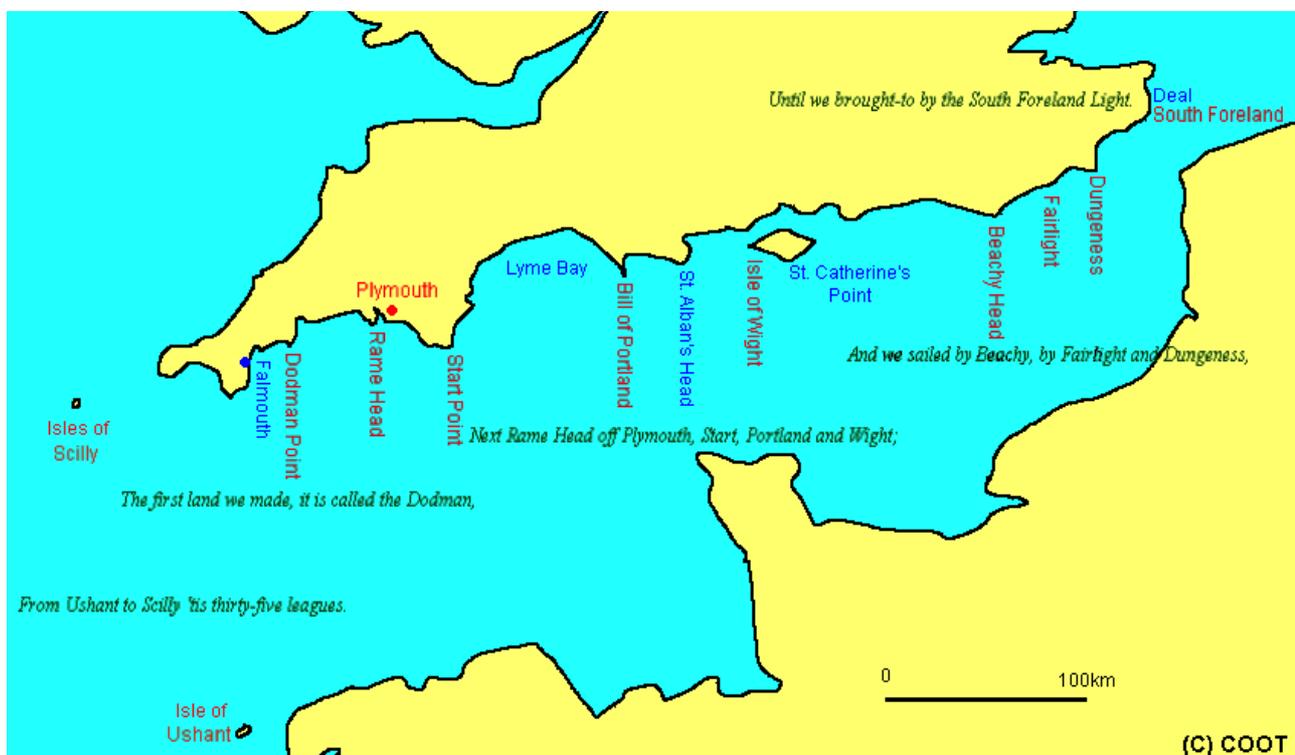
Next Ram's Head, past Plymouth, Start,
 Portland and Wight
 We sailed then by Beachy, by Fairlight,
 and Dungeness,
 Then wholly cracked on for the
 South Foreland Light.

4. Then the signal was made for the grand
 fleet to anchor,
 All in the Downs that night for to lie.
 We stood by our stopper, and brailed in
 in the spanker,
 Haul all our clew garnets, let tacks and
 sheets fly.

5. Now let every man toss off a full bumper
 And let every man drink off a full glass
 And we'll drink and be merry and drown
 melancholy
 Singing, here's a good health to each
 true-hearted lass.

Hear Hughie **Jones**' sing this version at
youtu.be/0s05G12CKbM

You can see where the song's landmarks in this map:



Stan Coot: A Map of English Channel
 From the web pages of **Oda Akio** (ARC Sea Shanty Club, Japan),
 "Ransome Songs," www.geocities.jp/coot2tm/songs/
 Thank you [Stan](#).

Notes:

A **Capstan** shanty - **homeward**, from 1769 or earlier.

Alternative Titles: Spanish Ladies, Farewell and Adieu

Place Names

Ushant - island off the westernmost point of Brittany.

Ushant to Scilly - usually sung as 35 leagues but sometimes 34 or 45.

"It's actually 38.7 leagues (187.0 KM)... But the distance from Ushant to Scilly had been used as an instrument of maritime law to determine the official length of the league, with the number increased or decreased depending whether the Crown wanted the league shorter or longer. Hence the song may correct, only outdated."

[\[strangenewwords.wordpress.com/2015/11/17/from-ushant-to-scilly/\]](http://strangenewwords.wordpress.com/2015/11/17/from-ushant-to-scilly/)

Deadman - Dodman Point, a headland near Mevagissey, Cornwall. Dodman means snail.

Ram Head - Rame Head, Cornwall, is a prominent hill west of the entrance to Plymouth Sound. (Eight miles south of Rame are the Eddystone rocks, along with the Eddystone Light.)

Start - Start Point promontory in Devon, by Start Bay, where the Dart emerges

Portland - Portland Bill, promontory on the Isle of Portland, Dorset

Wight - St Catherine's Point, the southernmost tip of the Isle of Wight

Beachy - Beachy Head (Jones puts Fairlight first!)

Fairlight - East Sussex, about halfway between Hastings and Winchelsea (Fairlight Hill presumably)

Dungeness - shingle headland, Kent. There have been seven lighthouses recorded here.

South Foreland - chalk headland five miles west of Dover, just before the Kent coast turns northward

The Downs - a roadstead, or sheltered area of sea, between Deal and the Goodwin Sands, between North and South Foreland - a very useful anchorage.

See: www.clamchowdah.org/2018/04/21/from-earth-day-to-scilly-is-thirty-five-leagues/ - fascinating read.

About other Words

league - the distance a person could walk in an hour, being 3 miles on land. At sea 3 nautical miles is about three and a half land miles. [*wikipedia*]

Fathom - six feet

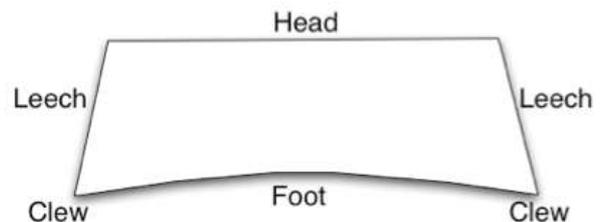
Sandy bottom - sandy sea floor, such as occurs on or near a beach (land ahoy!)

Stoppers - to fasten the anchor onto the cathead

Spanker - a sail on the aft-most mast of a ship

Clew - a lower corner of a square sail, to which **clew lines** are attached,

Clew garnet - the tackle attached to the clew line.



Tacks - ropes attached to sails and leading forward

Sheets - ropes attached to the sails and leading aft



Jon **Such**, *Bird's eye view of The Dodman* from nationaltrust.org.uk



Kevin **Walsh**, *Beachy Head Lighthouse* from commons.wikimedia.org