

William & Nancy's Parting

John Wesley Harding

Come all you pretty maidens that have a mind to go
All along with your lover for to face the daring foe
I've a mind to venture where the cannonballs do fly
All along with my love I'll go

He says 'my lovely nancy I hope you'll not repine
For I must go onboard our noble fleet to join
Our orders are to sea my dear and now we must obey
And behind me you must stay'

She says 'my lovely william oh don't you leave me here
I'll dress me as a seaman and along with you I'll steer
Oh let me go along with you your mess mate for to be
And I'll fight so manfully'

He says 'my lovely nancy great danger is at sea
Perhaps we may be shipwrecked or else be cast away
And in the line of battle perhaps you may be slain
So behind me you must remain'

'your pretty little fingers they are so long and small
You'll think it but hard usage our cable ropes to haul
When the winds they do blow high and the billows loudly roar
At home you must be on shore'

So now my love has gone abroad as I do tell you plain
Kind heaven shall protect him as he's ploughing on the main
Protect him from all danger where the cannonballs do fly
And send my william home again