

FAREWELL TO TARWATHIE

George Scroggie

Farewell to Tarwathie, adieu Mormond Hill
And the dear land of Crimond, I'll bid you farewell
I'm bound out for Greenland and ready to sail
In hopes to find riches in hunting the whale

Adieu to my comrades, for awhile we must part
And likewise the dear lass that fair won my heart
The cold ice of Greenland, my love will not chill
And the longer my absence, more loving she'll feel

Our ship is well rigged and she's ready to sail
Our crew, they are anxious to follow the whale
Where the icebergs do float and the stormy winds blow
Where the land and the ocean are covered with snow

The cold coast of Greenland is barren and bare
No seed time nor harvest is ever known there
And the birds here sing sweetly on mountain and dale
But there isn't a birdie to sing to the whale

There is no habitation for a man to live there
And the king of that country is the fierce Greenland bear
And there will be no temptation to tarry long there
With our ships bumper full, we will homeward repair

According to Ewan MacColl, this whaling song was written in the 1850s by George Scroggie of Aberdeenshire, although the tune might be borrowed from an earlier song. This tune appears in the US as "My Horses Ain't Hungry" and "Rye Whisky". An up-tempo version was a hit in the 1950s as "Shrimp Boats Are A-Comin". Bob Dylan borrowed the tune for his "Farewell, Angelina", recorded by Joan Baez.