


The Red and Gold Sail

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As a sea shantey: alternating solo and chorus

Waltz-like (♩ = 180)



Come, fill up your glasses. I'll sing you a tale. Now that she is gone.
My wife's on the ship with the red and gold sail. She's gone with Gyp - sy Davy.

Come, fill up your glasses. I'll sing you a tale.
Now that she is gone
My wife's on the ship with the red and gold sail.
She's gone with Gypsy Davy

I came back from Scotland with partridge and grouse
To find that my wife had deserted my house..

One servant denied but the other replied
My wife left to sail at the bold Gypsy's side.

"Then saddle my horse and I'll follow", I said,
"To see why she's leaving my house and my bed."

Although I rode hard and although I rode fast,
The red and gold sail was being hoist up the mast.

"Delay your departure ten minutes!" I cried.
"Be quick", said the Gypsy, "we must catch the tide!"

I spoke to my wife of the joys she would miss,
In leaving my house for the bold Gypsy's kiss.

I'll tell you the answers she made in defense,
Although to an Englishman they make no sense.

Our bread was the whitest that money can buy.
She said it's more healthy to eat bran and rye.

I dressed her in silks brought from China and France.
She said there's more comfort in loose cotton pants.

I brought home swift game that I shot from the sky.
She said if we hunt them the species will die.

I took her to church where the choir boys sing.
She said he will teach her guitar in the spring.

I built a warm house where the fires burn bright.
She said in Tahiti she'll sleep out at night.

I gave her four sons in our first seven years.
She said he has skins that will end all her fears.

And those are the reasons she gave me that day
The red and gold sail filled and bore her away.

So lift up your glasses and drink to my health,
And pity the man who's not loved for his wealth.

Other versions of this song are collectively known as Child Ballad #200, The Gypsy Laddie or Gypsy Davy