

Jim Jones

Traditional



Jim Jones

1. Come listen for a moment lads and hear me tell my tale,
How o'er the sea from England's shore I was compelled to sail.
The jury says "*He's guilty sir.*" and says the judge says he,
"*For life, Jim Jones, I'm sending you across the stormy sea.*"
2. "*But take a tip before you trip to join the iron gang.
Don't be too gay in Botany Bay, or else you'll surely hang.
Or else you'll hang,*" he said, said he, "*and after that Jim Jones,
High up upon the gallows tree, the crows will pick your bones.*"
3. "*You'll get no chance of mischief there, remember what I say.
They'll flog the poaching out of you when you get to Botany Bay!*"
Our convict ship, it put to sea. It was tossed by storms and gales.
I'd rather I'd drowned in misery than come to New South Wales.
4. The wind blew high upon the sea and the pirates came along.
But the soldiers in our convict ship, they were three hundred strong.
They opened fire and somehow drove that pirate ship away.
I'd rather have joined that pirate's crew than come to Botany Bay.
5. Where night and day the irons clang and like poor galley slaves,
We roil and moil until we die and fill dishonoured graves.
But by and by I'll break my chains and into the bush I'll go
And join the bold bushrangers there, Jack Donahue and Co.
6. And some dark night, when all is quiet in and round the town,
I'll kill the tyrants one and all, I'll shoot the floggers down.
I'll give the law a little shock, remember what I say.
They'll yet regret they sent Jim Jones in chains to Botany Bay.

Source

The lyrics are drawn from:

Ron Edwards, *The Overlander Songbook*, Rigby 1971, reprinted 1982

John Manifold, *The Penguin Australian Song Book*, Penguin 1964, reprinted 1971

Bill Scott, *Complete Book of Australian Folklore*, Lansdowne Press, 1976.

Edwards notes that this song was originally collected by Charles MacAlister and published in his *Old Pioneering Days in the Sunny South*, Goulburn, 1907. He notes that two lines are missing from the end of MacAlister's verse 3 and supplies words provided by John Meredith. In verse 3, line 3, I've substituted "*Our convict ship, it put to sea. It was tossed by storms and gales.*" for Meredith's words.

Glossary

roil vt, here used intransitively, to render water etc turbid by stirring up sediment, to disturb, disquiet, irritate, vex

moil vi, to work hard, toil, drudge