

# Barrett's Privateers

Words & Music:  
Stan Rogers

*This song is sung a capella, best with a group. Lines are called solo with the group responding with the "How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!" line and also joining in on the chorus. Stan Rogers was a wonderful folk singer in the New England/Canadian maritime tradition. This song is a great example of the naval work song and shows how interesting rhythm and story was in the old English/American/Canadian song traditions.*

O, the year was 1778.

*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*

A letter of marque came from the king  
To the scummiest vessel I've ever seen.

CHORUS:

God damn them all.

I was told we'd cruise the seas for American gold.

We'd fire no guns, shed no tears.

Now I'm a broken man on a Halifax pier,  
The last of Barrett's Privateers.

O, Elcid Barrett cried the town

*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*

For twenty brave men all fishermen who  
Would make for him the *Antelope's* crew

CHORUS:

The *Antelope* sloop was a sickening sight.

*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*

She'd list to the port and her sails in rags.

And the cook in the scuppers with the staggers & jags.

CHORUS:

On the King's birthday we put to sea.

*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*

Ninety-one days to Montego Bay,  
Pumping like madmen all the way

CHORUS:

On the ninety-sixth day we sailed again.  
*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*  
When a great big Yankee hove in sight.  
With our cracked four-pounders we made to fight

CHORUS:

The Yankee lay low down with gold.  
*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*  
She was broad and fat and loose in stays.  
But to catch her took the *Antelope* two whole days.

CHORUS:

Then, at length she stood two cables away.  
*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*  
Our cracked four-pounders made awful din.  
But with one fat ball the Yank stove us in.

CHORUS:

The *Antelope* shook and pitched on her side.  
*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*  
Barrett was smashed like a bowl of eggs  
And the main truck carried off both me legs.

CHORUS:

Now, here I lay in my twenty-third year.  
*[How I wish I was in Sherbrooke, now!]*  
It's been six years since we sailed away.  
And I just made Halifax yesterday.

CHORUS: