Strike the Bell Second Mate

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Up on the poop deck and walking about,
There is the second mate so steady and so stout;
What he is a-thinkin' of he doesn't know himself
And we wish that he would hurry up and strike, strike the bell.

Strike the bell second mate, let us go below;
Look well to windward you can see it's gonna blow;
Look at the glass, you can see it has fell,
Oh we wish that you would hurry up and strike, strike the bell.

Down on the main deck and workin' at the pumps,
There is the larboard watch just longing for their bunks;
Look out to windward, you can see a great swell,
And we wish that you would hurry up and strike, strike the bell

Forward on the forecastle head and keepin' sharp lookout,
There is Johnny standin', a-longin' fer to shout,
Lights' a-burnin' bright sir and everything is well,
And he's wishin' that the second mate would strike, strike the bell.

Aft at the wheelhouse old Anderson stands,
Graspin' at the helm with his frostbitten hands,
Lookin' at the compass through the course is clear as hell
And he's wishin' that the second mate would strike, strike the bell.

Aft on the quarter deck our gallant captain stands,
Lookin' out to windward with a spyglass in his hand,
What he is a-thinkin' of we know very well,
He's thinkin' more of shortenin' sail than strikin' the bell.

Traditional. Hugill lists three shore songs which have the same tune as this pumping chantey: the Scottish tune "Ring the Bell Watchman", the Australian tune from the shearing sheds, "Click Go the Shears", and the Welsh air "Twill Back y Clo".

At the end of the watch (8 hours), everyone is ready to lay below, and the last thing anyone wishes to hear is a call for all hands.

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