

A Lay of Mizen Head

The subject of 'A Lay of Mizen Head' was the *Confiance*, sloop of war, lost April 1822 about a mile from Mizen Head. All aboard were lost, among them many young midshipmen, who had just joined the service and were on their way to join their respective ships.

The last four verses of twelve of a poem written by Callanan:

The sun went down and through the clouds looked out the evening star.
And westward from Old Ocean's Head beheld that ship afar.
Still onward fearlessly she flew in her snowy pinion sweep,
Like a bright and beauteous spirit o'er the mountains of the deep.

It blows a fearful tempest – 'tis the dead watch of the night –
The Mizen's giant brow is streaked with red and angry light –
And by its far illuming glance a struggling barque i see.
Wear, wear, the land, ill-fated one, is close beneath your lee!

Another flash-they still hold out for home and love and life,
And under close-reefed topsail maintain the unequal strife.
Now out the rallying foresail flies, the last, the desperate chance-
Can that be she? – O heavens it is – the luckless *Confiance*!

Hark! Heard you not that dismal cry? T'was stifled in the gale –
Oh I clasp, young bride, thine orphan child, and raise the widow's wail!
The morning rose in purple light o'er the ocean's tranquil sleep –
But o'er their gallant quarry lay the spoilers of the deep.