

Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson

In this extract from Chapter 1, the narrator, Jim Hawkins, remembers when he first met the man who asked to be addressed as Captain Billy Bones.

I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow—a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man, his tarry pigtail falling over the shoulder of his soiled blue coat, his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails, and the sabre cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him
5 looking round the cover and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterwards:

*“Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!”*

10 in the high, old tottering voice that seemed to have been tuned and broken at the capstan bars. Then he rapped on the door with a bit of stick like a handspike that he carried, and when my father appeared, called roughly for a glass of rum. This, when it was brought to him, he drank
15 slowly, like a connoisseur, lingering on the taste and still looking about him at the cliffs and up at our signboard.

“This is a handy cove,” says he at length; “and a pleasant sittyated grog-shop. Much company, mate?”

My father told him no, very little company, the more was the pity.

20 “Well, then,” said he, “this is the berth for me. Here you, matey,” he cried to the man who trundled the barrow; “bring up alongside and help up my chest. I'll stay here a bit,” he continued. “I'm a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and that head up there for to watch ships off. What you mought call me? You mought call me captain. Oh, I see
25 what you're at—there”; and he threw down three or four gold pieces on the threshold. “You can tell me when I've worked through that,” says he, looking as fierce as a commander.

Circle or tick the correct answers.

1. What is the extract mostly about?

A treasure island

Rum

Captain Billy Bones

The narrator's father

2. What is Captain Billy Bones carrying in a handbarrow?

Sea-chest

Rum

A soiled blue coat

A sabre

3. Which of the following best describes the physical appearance of Captain Billy Bones?

Drunk

Plain

Dirty

Plodding

4. What do you think a 'connoisseur' is?

A person who drinks a lot

An expert rum drinker

A dishonest person

Someone with good taste

5. What do you think a 'grog-shop' is?

A boat

An inn or bar

A berth

A restaurant

Answers:
1. Captain Billy Bones
2. Sea-chest
3. Dirty
4. Someone with good taste
5. An inn or bar