

# Shanties for mixed choir - SATB arranged by Per Ivar Søbstad

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# What is a shanty?

The word has different meanings, but today "shanty" or "sea shanty" means work song on full rigged ships. The shanty genre provided for much improvisation and the ability to lengthen or shorten a song to match the circumstances. Its hallmark was call and response, performed between a soloist and the rest of the workers in chorus. The leader, called the shantyman, was appreciated for his piquant language, lyrical wit, and strong voice. Therefore you can find many variations in the lyrics as in other kinds of folk songs. Shanties were sung without instrumental accompaniment and, historically speaking, they were only sung in workbased contexts. The switch to steampowered ships and the use of machines for shipboard tasks, by the end of the 19th century, meant that shanties gradually ceased to serve a practical function.

#### The most common types of shanties

#### Types related to hauling actions

Longdrag shanty (also called a "halyard shanty")

Sung with the job of hauling on halyards to hoist, over an extended period, topsail or topgallant yards. Usually there are two pulls per chorus as in "Way, hey, Blow the man down!" Examples: "Hanging Johnny," "Whiskey Johnny," and "Blow the Man Down."

**Shortdrag shanty** Sung for short hauling jobs requiring a few bursts of great force, such as changing direction of sails via lines called braces, or hauling taut the corners of sails with sheets or tacks. These are characterized by one strong pull per chorus, typically on the last word, as in "Way, haul away, haul away "Joe"?" Examples: "Boney," "Haul on the Bowline," and "Haul Away Joe."

#### Types related to heaving actions

**Capstan shanty** Raising the anchor on a ship involved winding its rope around a capstan, a sort of giant winch, turned by sailors heaving wooden bars while walking around it. Other heavy tasks might also be assisted by using a capstan. Being a continuous action, shanties sung to accompany these tasks might have longer solo verses and, frequently, a "grand chorus," in addition to the call-and-response form. Examples: "Santianna", "Paddy Lay Back," "Rio Grande," "Clear the Track, Let the Bulgine Run," "Shenandoah", and "John Brown's Body."

Windlass shanty Modern shanties were used to accompany work at the patent windlass, which was designed to raise anchor and was operated by the see-saw like action of pumping hand brakes. The up and down motion of the brake levers lent the action a binary form that was well-suited by many of the same songs used as halyard shanties. And yet, the continuous nature of the task also meant grand choruses were possible. So while halyard shanties and capstan shanties tended to be exclusive of one another, windlass shanties sometimes shared repertoire with each of those other types. Examples: "Sally Brown," "Heave Away, My Johnnies," and "Mister Stormalong."

**Pump shanty** Operation of Downton pump. Because of leakage of water into the holds of wooden ships, they had to be regularly pumped out. The frequency and monotony of this task inspired the singing of many shanties. One design of pump worked very similarly to the brake windlass, while another, the Downton pump, was turned by handles attached to large wheels. Examples: "Strike The Bell," "Fire Down Below," "South Australia", and "One More Day." An example of special note is "Leave Her, Johnny, Leave Her" (also known as "Time for Us to Leave Her"), which was generally sung during the last round of pumping the ship dry once it was tied up in port, prior to the crew leaving the ship at the end of the voyage.

# What kind of shanties do you find in this book?

**1. A-roving** - A popular capstan shanty describing the pleasures waiting sailor John in harbour. The word "ruin" used to be sung "ru-ey-in"

**2.** Blow the man down - A halyard shanty said to be the war cry of the "Packet rats", the tough crews working for the disreputable "Blackball line" sailing the Liverpool - New York line.

**3. Can't you dance the polka?** This popular capstan shanty has many names. Polka became popular in the first half of the nineteenth century, reaching New York in 1840-1850

**4. Dead horse** - Before a ship left a harbour, the sailors got one month's pay in advance. That was "money for nothing" or they "got paid for a dead horse". After one month they had worked for the money and they sang this shanty at a ceremony where they buried a "horse" built of different materials into the sea.

**5. Donkey riding** - Very popular at the capstan when loading huge logs onto timber droghers in the ports of Atlantic Canada, and also for unloading them when they reached Europe

**6.** Farewell and adieu - An "outward bound" song, a ballad said to have been written and composed for the Royal Navy, thus not primarly a shanty

7. Haul away Joe - Famous tack and sheet shanty but probably also a halvard shanty. Exsists in many versions in both minor and major key.

**8. John Kanaka** - Halyard shanty. The word "kanaka" is of Polynesian and Melanesian origin, with the meaning of "man" or "human being".

9. Leave her, Johnny - Regularly sung when pumping out the ship at the end of the trip.

**10. Rio Grande** - Always an outward-bound song, sung at the capstan or windlass. Rio Grande refers to the Rio Grande of Brazil. "Rio" was pronounced "Rye-O"

**11. Sally Brown** - Windlass shanty, probably from the West Indies. Nobody seems to know the meaning of "wild goose nation". It may refer to Ireland.

**12.** Santy Anna - This capstan and windlass shanty has many variants. In this version Santy Anna won the day and general Taylor ran away. The true historical fact is that General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, president of Mexico, was defeated at Molina del Rey in 1847 by the United States army under General Taylor. California, New Mexico and Texas were annexed by the United States, and General Taylor became president.

13. Serafina - From the days of the nitrate trade along the west coast of South America

14. Shenandoah - The song appears to have originated with Canadian and American voyageurs or fur traders traveling down the Missouri River in canoes and later become a sea shanty.

**15.** The twentyfourth of February - The strange fact that these Turkish men-o'-war, "all belonging to Algiers", bore names such as the Pink and the Rose and Crown, may indicate that these British ships were the booty of early pirate conquests.

**16. We're all bound to go** - Popular windlass shanty of Irish origin. Tapscott was a well known packet agent in Liverpool. This song was always song in imitated Irish brogue.

**17. Whoop jamboree** - This homeward-bound shanty was usually sung at capstan or windlass. The overall theme is similar to "Spanish Ladies", naming various landmarks on the final stages of the voyage - sometimes to the Blackwall Docks in London, but more often into Liverpool, ending up at Dan Lowry's.

Source: Gullers/Sundblad "Sea songs" and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea\_shanty

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Trad shanty



#### A-roving

14.

In Amsterdam there lived a maid.
 Bless, you young woman.
 In Amsterdam there lived a maid.
 Oh, mind what I do say.
 In Amsterdam there lived a maid
 And she was mistress of her trade.
 I'll go no more a-roving with you fair maid.
 A-roving, a-roving, since roving's been my ruin
 I'll og no more a-roving with you fair maid

- 2. One night I crept from my abode / To meet this fair maid down the road.
- 3. I met this fair maid after dark, / And took her to her favourite park.
- 4. I took this fair maid for a walk, / And we had such a lovely talk.
- 5. I put me hand upon her waist, / Sez she, "Young man, yer in great haste!"
- 6. I put me hand upon her breast, / Sez she, "The wind is blowin' sou'-sou'- west."
- 7. I put my hand upon her knee, / Sez she, "Young man, yer rather free!"
- 8. I put me hand upon her thigh, / Sez, she, "Young man, yer rather high!"
- 9. Her dainty arms wuz white as milk, / Her lovely hair wuz soft as silk.
- 10. Her heart wuz pounding like a drum, / Her lips wuz red as any plum.
- 11. We laid down on a grassy patch, / An' I felt such a ruddy ass.
- 12. I pushed her over on her back, / An' then she let me have me mack.

13. In three weeks' time I wuz badly bent, / Then off to sea I sadly went.

She swore that she'd be true to me, / But spent me pay-day fast an' free.

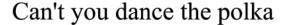
15. Now when I got back home from sea, / A soger had her on his knee

Trad shanty

#### Blow the man down

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad





Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad



Trad shanty

## Dead horse

Trad shanty

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Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad
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SOPRANO And they say and they so ALTO And they and they say SC TENOR They old horse will die and they say and they say man your so BASS They say old man your horse will die and they say and they so S. 9 hope so Oh poor old man A. Oh old hope so poor man T. Oh poor old\_man your horse will\_die, oh hope so poor old\_poor old man B. Oh poor old man your horse will die oh hope so old poor man They say old man your horse will die, And they say so, and they hope so. Oh, poor old man your horse will die, Oh, poor old man! For thirty days I've ridden him, And they say so, and they hope so. And when he dies we'll tan his skin, Oh, poor old man! And if he lives, I'll ride him again, And they say so, and they hope so. I'll ride him with a tighter rein, Oh, poor old man! It's up aloft the horse must go, And they say so, and they hope so. We'll hoist him up and bury him low, *Oh, poor old man!* 

# Donkey riding

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Trad shanty





# Farewell and adieu





We'll rant and we'll rove like true bri tish







Haul away Joe

Arr © Søbstad Musikk og Data Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad



### John Kanaka

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad



#### John Kanaka

I thought I heard the old man say John Kanakanaka too lie ay Today, today is a holiday John Kanakanaka too lie ay Too lie ay, oh, to lie ay John Kanaka-naka too lie ay

We'll work tomorrow but no work today We'll work tomorrow 'til the break of day

We're bound away for 'Frisco Bay We're bound away at the break of day

We're bound away 'round Cape Horn We wish to Christ we'd never been born

Oh haul, oh haul, oh haul away Oh haul away and make your pay

And we are Liverpool born and bred We're strong in the arm but we're thick in the head

### Leave her, Johnny

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad



#### LEAVE HER JOHNNY, LEAVE HER

 Oh, the time was hard and the wages low, leave her, Johnny, leave her!
 But now once more ashore we'll go, and it's time for us to leave her!

#### Ref.:

Leave her. Johnny, leave her! Oh, leave her. Johnny, leave her! For the voyage is done and the winds don't blow, and it's time for us to. leave her!

2. Oh,I thought I heard the Old Man say, tomorrow you will get your pay.

3. The work was hard and the voyage was long, The sea was high and the gales were strong.

4. The grub was bad and the wages low but now once more ashore we'll go.

5. We'd be better off in a nice clean gaol. with all night in and plenty of ale.

6. Oh, sing that we hoys will never be in a hungry bitch the likes of she.

7. "The Old Man swears and the mate swears too the crew all swear and so would you.

8. The winds were foul. all work. no play. to Liverpool docks from Frisco Bay.

9. The ship won't stear. nor stay, nor wear, and so us shellbacks learnt to swear.

10 Oh, leave her, Johnny, and we'll work no more, of pump or drown we've had full store.

13 The sails are furled and our work is done and now ashore we'll have our bit of fun.

14. We'll make her fast and slow our gear. the gals are awaiting on the pier.

15. Leave her. Johnny, you can leave her like a man, O leave her. Johnny. O leave her while vou can!

## Rio grande





#### **RIO GRANDE**

1. Oh say, were you ever in Rio Grande Oh, Rio

It's there where the river flows down golden sand Ref And we're bound for the Rio Grande

And we're bound for the Rio Grande Then away love away. Way down Rio So fare ye well my pretty young girl For we're bound for the Rio Grande

2. Sing goodbye to Sally and goodbye to Sue! Oh, Rio And you who are listening, goodbye to you!

3. We're a jolly good ship and a jolly good crew. Oh, Rio We've jolly good mates and a good skipper too.

4. Now fill up your glasses and sing "Fare ye well" Oh, Rio To the pretty young ladies who loved you so well.

5. Goodbye, fare ye well, all you girls of the town Oh, Rio We've left you enough for to buy a silk gown.

6. Oh man the good capstan and run her around. Oh, Rio We'll heave up the anchor to this bully song.

7. So heave up the anchor, let's get it away! Oh, Rio It is a good grip, so heave, bullies, away.

8. The chain's up and down now, the Bosun did say. Oh, Rio It's up to the hawsepipe, the anchor's aweight.



Sally Brown

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad



Bet my money on Sally Brown.

give her rum without any water.

Bet my money on Sally Brown.

Way - ay, roll and go!

Now, Sally Brown, I love your daughter

Bet my money on Sally Brown.

I bought her gowns and I bought her laces Way - ay, roll and go! I took her out to all the places. Bet my money on Sally Brown.

Music and lyrics: Trad shanty

#### Trad shanty

#### Santy Anna

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad



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#### SANTY ANNA

We're outward bound from Liverpool, Hooray, Santy Anna! The sails are set and the hatches full, all on the plains of Mexico.

We're outward bound for Mexico, Hooray, Santy Anna! to Mexico where the whalefish blow, all on the plains of Mexico.

In Mexico I long to be, Hooray, Santy Anna! with a tightwaisted girl all on my knee, all on the plains of Mexico.

Them Spanish girls I do adore, Hooray, Santy Anna! they all drink wine an' ax for more, all on the plains of Mexico.

Oh, Santy Anna gained the day, Hooray, Santy Anna! and General Taylor ran away, all on the plains of Mexico.

'Twas on the field of Molly del Rey Hooray, Santy Anna! Santy Anna lost a leg that day, all on the plains of Mexico.

Oh, Santy Anna's dead and gone Hooray, Santy Anna! and all the fighting has been done, all on the plains of Mexico.

So heave away for Mexico. Hooray, Santy Anna! for Mexico where the whalefish blow, all on the plains of Mexico.



#### Trad shanty

Serafina

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad

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#### Serafina

 In Callao there lives a gal Whose name is Serafina Serafina! Serafina!
 She sleeps all day and 'works' all night on the old Cally Marina Serafina! Oh, Serafina!

2. She's the queen, me boys, of all the gals That live in the ole' Casino, She used to 'kiss' for monkey nuts But now she 'works' for vino.

3. At robbin' silly sailors, boys, No gal was ever keener She'll make you pay right through the nose, That lovely Serafina!

4. She'll guzzle pisco, beer and gin, on rum her mum did wean her She smokes just like a chimney stack on a P.S.N.C steamer.

5. Serafina's got no 'shoes', I been ashore an' seen 'er She's got no time to put them on, That hard-worked Serafina.

6. When I was young an' in me prime, I first met Serafina In Callao we saw the sights An' then went up to Lima.

7. But the finest sight I ever saw Was little Serafina, But the very next day as we sailed away, I wished I'd never been there.

8. For I wuz skint, me clothes wuz gone, An' so wuz Serafina. She'd done me brown, she'd sunk me down, That dirty she-hyena!

9. I used to love a little girl Whose name was Serafina But she's gone off with a Dago man Who plays a concertina.



4. vers: Oh Shanandoah, I long to her you. Away .... Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you. Away osv



#### The twentyforth of February

On the twentyforth of February, the weather being clear, we spied sev'n sails of Turkish men-o-war, all belonging to Algier.

Ref

Ref With my right fol leather-ol, right fol leather-ol, right fol leather-ol-day! Roddle-diddle-di, roddle-diddle-day, a right fol leather-ol-day!

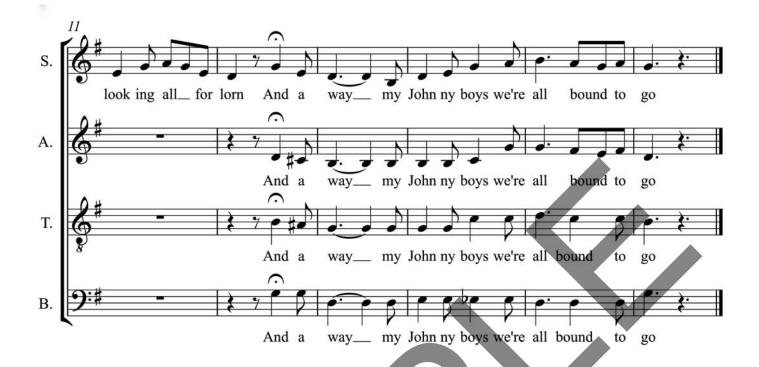
Now the first that came to our ship's side it was The Pink so clear, commanded by the big Bashaw and belonging to Algier. Ref

The next that came to our ship's side it was The Rose and Crown We fired into her a good broadside, and quickly she went down.

So two we took, and one we sunk, the rest, they ran away, and one we brought to old England's shore to show we had won the day. We're all bound to go

Arr.: Per Ivar Søbstad





Oh as I walked down the landing stage All on a Summer's morn **Heave away, my Johnny heave away** It's there I spied an Irish girl A-looking all forlorn **And away my Johnny boys** We're all bound to go

Oh good morning, Mister Tapscott Good morning, my girl, says he Heave away my Johnny heave away Have you got a packet ship To carry me across the sea And away my Johnny boys We're all bound to go

Oh yes Lhave a clipper ship She's called the Henry Clay **Heave away my Johnny heave away** She sails today for Boston Bay She sails away at break of day. **And away my Johnny boys We're all bound to go** 

Oh will you take me to Boston Bay When she sails away at break of day **Heave away my Johnny heave away** I want to marry a Yankee boy And I'll cross the sea no more **And away my Johnny boys** We're all bound to go



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