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AMERICAN SEA SONGS AND SHANTIES

Edited by

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Preface

The songs and shanties on these two long-playing records are all sung, without exception, by men who used them in the days of sail. Two of the men, Richard Maitland and "Sailor Dad" Hunt, are no longer living, and Capt. Leighton Robinson is, at this writing, a very active 84 years. (The listener will agree that his voice belies his age.) With the advent of steam and the end of sail, any practical use for these work songs disappeared, and they survived only in the memory of old-timers. As indicated, however, the old-timers themselves are passing on, and, in the not distant future, there will be no one who actually used these folksongs in the traditional folk manner within a folk industry. There have been book collections of the shanties, to be sure, and a record of them in that form will always be preserved. There have, however, been few actual recordings made of the men themselves, and it is believed that these two records constitute the first ever presented to the public. We are able through them to listen to the past, and to feel, in the slow rhythm of the songs, the tremendous seas of yesterday.

To those who may be acquainted with certain of these songs through the radio or from the singing of trained vocalists, one thing is at once apparent -- the slow tempo of the singing. This tempo is true to the tradition, and any faster tempo is a falsification of the shanties. The shanties were work songs, and the work was slow and arduous; the work would have been impossible at a faster tempo. When one remembers that the hauling up of the anchor -- with the men walking in treadmill fashion around the capstan, heaving on the bars -- usually took from three to four hours at a minimum, the slow and measured tread of "Amsterdam Maid," "Rio Grande," and "Homeward Bound" becomes readily understandable. These songs, therefore, are authentic in terms of the place and time when they were used. We are fortunate that they have been preserved, if for this reason alone.

There are three chief types of shanties included on these two records, exclusive of the nonwork songs ("The Sailor's Alphabet" and "When Jones's Ale Was New") which were sung solely for entertainment and amusement. The first type is the capstan shanty which, as has been indicated, was used for

the long work at the capstan, either hauling the anchor in or "heaving the ship from one berth to another" while in port. The shantyman, leading the song, usually sat on the capstan head, singing out the main lines of the song, while the members of the crew -- two or three to each capstan bar -- picked up, virtually without any break, the rolling lines of the chorus. "Rio Grande," as sung by Capt. Robinson, with his three men coming in on the chorus, is a good example of the capstan shanty. The listener should, however, in his imagination, magnify their voices to those of twenty or thirty men sweating away at their work in order to feel the full power of the song as sung in any harbor of the world. In Richard Maitland's "Amsterdam Maid," even though sung by him alone, the listener also can catch without trouble the steady beat of the men's feet as they marched in unison at the bars.

The halyard shanties, a second group, were pulling shanties used chiefly for hoisting the yards. This again was long work, as distinguished from the third group of short-haul shanties. The chief examples of these halyard shanties on the present records are "Blow, Boys, Blow," "Whisky Johnny," "Reuben Ranzo," "Blow the Man Down," and "A Long Time Ago." Although the change of pace is not indicated in the songs sung here, the tempo of the songs became slower as the rising weight of the heavy sail made the labor of hoisting more difficult.

The third group of short-haul shanties were used only when a short and hard pull was needed, for bunting up a sail when furling it, or for hauling aft the foresheet after reefing the foresail. Examples of the short-haul shanties on the records are "Paddy Doyle," "Haul the Bowline," and "Johnny Boker."

One other shanty, "The Drunken Sailor," may best be described as a walkaway-shanty, since it was chiefly used while walking away with the slack of a rope on deck. (Exact description of its use will be found with the text of the song.) It has also been classified as a halyard shanty, and may well have been used for that purpose as well.

References for Study: The standard work for the study of sea shanties and their traditional use is William Main Doerflinger's Shantymen and Shantyboys (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1951; 374 pp.) All the shanties are included, the explanatory text is excellent, and a bibliography lists all of the basic books on the subject. Students using Doerflinger's work should consult particularly the detailed notes on each song which appear in the Appendix, pp. 324-359. Another fine work also is Joanna C. Colcord's Songs of American Sailors (W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1938; 212 pp.). Both authors have consulted the chief sources, and have also gone directly to the old sailors themselves for their material.

AFS L-26 AMERICAN SEA SONGS AND SHANTIES

A1

HAUL THE BOWLINE

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

This is the oldest known short-haul shanty, and, according to John Masefield, goes back to the days of Henry VIII. Its age is proven by the text itself, since the "bowline" as a term on sailing vessels has not been used since the late 16th or early 17th century. At that time, the bowline was the equivalent of the present day foresheet. The pull in the shanty comes on the last word -- haul -- of each stanza. References: Doerflinger, p. 9; Colcord, p. 42.

"Now this is a short song that's usually used in pulling aft a sheet or hauling down a tack."

Haul the bowline, the long-tailed bowline,  
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.  
(That's the chorus")

Haul the bowline, Kitty, oh, my darling,  
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.

Haul the bowline, we'll haul and haul together,  
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.

Haul the bowline, we'll haul for better weather,  
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.

Haul the bowline, we'll bust, we'll break our banner,  
Haul the bowline, the bowline haul.

A2

BLOW, BOYS, BLOW

[Sung by Noble B. Brown at Woodman, Wisconsin, 1946. Recorded by Helene Stratman-Thomas and Aubrey Snyder on a joint field collecting project for the University of Wisconsin and the Library of Congress.]

Both Doerflinger and Colcord are in agreement that this halyard shanty is purely American in origin, and came into being during the days of the North Atlantic packet trade with Liverpool, shortly after the War of 1812. It was widely popular, as the four variants which Doerflinger gives attest. References: Doerflinger, p. 25; Colcord, p. 50.

A Yankee ship came down the river,  
Blow, boys, blow,  
A Yankee ship came down the river,  
Blow, boys, bonny boys, blow.

And how do you know she's a Yankee clipper?  
Blow, boys, blow,  
Oh, how do you know she's a Yankee clipper?  
Blow, boys, bonny boys, blow.

The stars and bars they flew behind her,  
The stars and bars they flew behind her.

And who do you think was the skipper of her?  
A bluenosed Nova Scotia hardcase.

And who do you think was the chief mate of her?  
A loudmouthed disbarred Boston lawyer.

And what do you think we had for breakfast?  
The starboard side of an old sou'wester.

Then what do you think we had for dinner?  
We had monkey's heart and shark's liver.

Can you guess what we had for supper?  
We had strong salt junk and weak tea water.

Then blow us out and blow us homeward,  
Oh, blow today and blow tomorrow.

Blow fair and steady, mild and pleasant,  
Oh, blow us into Boston Harbor.

We'll blow ashore and blow our pay day,  
Then blow aboard and blow away.

We'll blow until our blow is over,  
Blow, boys, blow,  
From Singapore to Cliffs of Dover,  
Blow, boys, bonny boys, blow.

A3

THE DRUNKEN SAILOR

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailor's Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

The special use for this walkaway shanty is clearly described by the singer, Richard Maitland. Because the men stamped on the deck with the words "Way hey and up she rises," it is also known as a stamp-and-go shanty. References: Doerflinger, p. 48; Colcord, p. 78.

"Now this is a song that's usually sung when men are walking away with the slack of a rope, generally when the iron ships are scrubbing their bottom. After an iron ship has been twelve months at sea, there's a quite a lot of barnacles and grass grows onto her bottom. And generally, in the calm latitudes, up in the horse latitudes in the North Atlantic Ocean, usually they rig up a purchase for to scrub the bottom. You can't do it when the ship is going over three mile an hour, but less than that, of course, you can do so. But it all means a considerable walking, not much labor, but all walking. And they have a song called 'The Drunken Sailor' that comes in for that."

Now what shall we do with the drunken sailor,  
What shall we do with the drunken sailor,  
What shall we do with the drunken sailor  
Early in the morning?

Oh, chuck him in the long boat till he gets sober,  
Chuck him in the long boat till he gets sober,  
Chuck him in the long boat till he gets sober  
Early in the morning.

Ay hey and up she rises,  
Ay hey and up she rises  
Ay hey and up she rises  
Early in the morning.

Oh, what shall we do with the drunken soldier,  
What shall we do with the drunken soldier,  
What shall we do with drunken soldier  
Early in the morning.

Oh, put him in the guardhouse and make him bail her,  
Put him in the guardhouse till he gets sober,  
Put him in the guardhouse till he gets sober  
Early in the morning.

Way hey and up she rises,  
Way hey and up she rises,  
Way hey and up she rises  
Early in the morning.

Oh, here we are nice and sober,  
Her we are nice and sober,  
Here we are nice and sober  
Early in the morning.

Oh, way hey and up she rises,  
Way hey and up she rises,  
Way hey and up she rises  
Early in the morning.

A4

REUBEN RANZO

[Sung by Noble B. Brown at Woodman, Wisconsin, 1946. Recorded by Helene Stratman-Thomas and Aubrey Snyder on a joint field collecting project for the University of Wisconsin and the Library of Congress.]

Unverified tradition has it that Reuben Ranzo was a Boston sailor who was shanghaied aboard a whaling vessel, and subjected, as the song states, to the hardships and indignities of life at sea on a long voyage. Other variants of the halyard shanty are kinder to poor Reuben: the daughter of the skipper intercedes for him, he becomes a good sailor, and marries her. References: Doerflinger, p. 23; Colcord, p. 70.

Poor old Reuben Ranzo,  
Ranzo, boy, Ranzo,  
Poor old Reuben Ranzo,  
Ranzo, boy, Ranzo.

He shipped aboard a whaler,  
Ranzo, boy, Ranzo,  
But Ranzo was no sailor,  
Ranzo, boy, Ranzo.

He could not do his duty,  
For neither love nor beauty.

He could not find his sea legs,  
Used clumsy, awkward land pegs.

He could not coil a line right,  
Did not know end from rope's bight.

Cold not splice the main brace,  
He was a seasick soft case.

He could not box the compass,  
The skipper raised a rumpus.

The old man was a bully,  
At sea was wild and woolly.

Abused poor Reuben plenty,  
He scourged him five and twenty.

He lashed him to the mainmast,  
The poor seafaring outcast.

Poor Reuben cried and pleaded,  
But he was left unheeded.

Some vessels are hard cases,  
Keep sailors in strict places.

Do not show any mercy,  
For Reuben, James, nor Percy.

The ocean is exacting,  
Is often cruel acting.

A sailor never whimpers,  
Ranzo, boy, Ranzo,  
Though shanghaied by shore crimpers,  
Ranzo, boy, Ranzo.

"I learned that aboard a sailing ship on a voyage from San Francisco to Falmouth, England."

A5

A-ROVING

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

"A-Roving," or "The Amsterdam Maid," is perhaps the oldest of the great capstan shanties, going back in time at least to 1630 when it appeared in Thomas Heywood's Rape of Lucrece as performed on the London stage. At its point of origin, it was probably not a shanty, but a shore song whose rhythm, however, lent itself to immediate and successful adaptation at sea. References: Doerflinger, p. 56; Colcord, p. 87.

"Now this is a song that we usually sing on the capstan, heaving the anchor up, before the days of steam come in to help us out...also to heave the ship in from different parts of the dock to other berths made for her, when she had to shift around."

In Amsterdam there lived a maid,  
And she was mistress of her trade,  
I'll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid;  
For a-roving, a-roving, since roving's been my ruin,  
I'll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid.

Her eyes were like twin stars at night,  
And her cheeks they rivalled the roses red,  
I'll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid;  
For a-roving, a-roving, since roving's been my ruin,  
I'll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid.

I asked this fair maid where she lived,  
She rooms up on Skidamsky Dyke.

I took this fair maid for a walk,  
For I liked to hear her loving talk.

I placed my hand upon her knee,  
Says she, "Young man, you're getting free."

This last six months I've been to sea,  
And, boys, this gal looked good to me.

In three weeks time I was badly bent,\*\*  
And then to sea I sadly went.

On a red hot Yank bound 'round Cape Horn,  
My clothes and boots were in the pawn,  
I'll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid;  
For a-roving, a-roving, since roving's been my ruin,  
I'll go no more a-roving with you, fair maid.

A6

#### HEAVE AWAY

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

As Doerflinger points out, in a full and excellent note on this song, the green Irish emigrant engages in conversation with "Mr. Tapscott" of the Liverpool emigrant firm of W. and T. J. Tapscott. The wily agent, pronouncing the word "male" intends it to mean to the unsuspecting traveller "mail," thereby leading him happily and innocently to believe that he is boarding a

\*\* "Bent": slang, equivalent to contemporary "broke,"

speedy mail packet. Actually, however, the "male" stands for the bags of "meal" loaded aboard to feed the passengers, and only after the ship has sailed does the passenger realize the extent to which he has been hoodwinked. With changing pronunciation, the play upon the word "male" was lost sight of. References: Doerflinger, p. 60; Colcord, p. 93.

"This song related to one of the old packet ships, emigrant ships, when they used to carry emigrants across to New York in the sailing ships, before the steamboats took to robbing them of their jobs. It relates about an emigrant meeting old Captain Tapscott...Tapscott was the owner of the Line called the Black Ball Line...Tapscott's ships."

One morning as I was a-walking down by the Waterloo Docks,  
Heave away, my Johnny, heave away,  
I overheard an emigrant conversing with Tapscott,  
And away, my jolly boys, we're all bound to go.

"Good morning, Mr. Tapscott, good morning, sir," says she,  
Heave away, my Johnny, heave away,  
"Oh, have you any ship or two that'll carry me over the sea?"  
And away, my jolly boys, we're all bound to go.

"Oh, yes, my noble young Irish blade, I have a ship or two,"  
Heave away, my Johnny, heave away,  
"One is the Joshua Walker, and the other's the Kangaroo,"  
And away, my jolly boys, we're all bound to go.

"Now the Joshua Walker on Friday she will make sail,"  
Heave away, my Johnny, heave away,  
"The present day she's taking on board a thousand bags of male,"  
And away, my jolly boys, we're all bound to go.

[Bad luck to the Joshua Walker and the day that she made sail,  
For the sailor's got drunk and broke upon the trunk, and stole  
all me yallow male!]

B1

#### THE SAILOR'S ALPHABET

[Sung by Capt. Leighton Robinson at Mill Valley, California, 1951. Recorded by Sam Esling.]

"The Sailor's Alphabet" is not a shanty, but, rather, a song sung by the men when they were relaxed in the forecabin, or enjoying themselves ashore. It does not appear in either Doerflinger or Colcord, but it is quite obviously patterned on, or related to, the various other "Alphabet" songs, such as "The Lumberman's Alphabet" and "The Soldier's Alphabet."

#### Chorus:

So merry, so merry, so merry are we,  
No mortal on earth's like a sailor at sea,  
So merry are we as we're sailing along,  
Give a sailor his grog and then nothing goes wrong.

Oh, A is the anchor and that you all know,  
B is the bowsprit that's over the bow,  
C is the capstan with which we heave 'round,  
And D are the decks where our sailors are found.



Oh, E is the ensign our mizzen-peak flew,  
F is the fo'c'sle where we muster our crew,  
G are the guns, sir, by which we all stand,  
And H are the halyards that oft-times are manned.

Oh, I is the iron of our stunsail boom sheet,  
J is the jib that oft weathers the bleat,  
K is the keelson away down below,  
And L are the lanyards that give us good hold.

M is our mainmast so stout and so strong,  
N is the needle that never points wrong,  
O are the oars of our jollyboat's crew,  
And P is the pennant of red, white, and blut.

Q is the quarterdeck where our captain oft stood,  
R is the rigging that ever holds good,  
S are the stilliards that weigh out our beef,  
And T are the topsails we oft-times do reef.

Oh, U is the Union at which none dare laugh,  
V are the vang's that steady the gaff,  
W's the wheel that we all take in time,  
And X is the letter for which we've no rhyme.

Oh, Y are the yards that we oft-times do brace,  
Z is the letter for which we've no place,  
The bo'sun pipes grog, so we'll all go below,  
My song it is finished, I'm glad that it's so.

B2

PADDY DOYLE

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

This short-haul shanty was used, as Maitland indicates, solely for the purpose of bunting up a sail when furling it. Paddy Doyle, to whom reference is made, was a Liverpool boarding-house master, and the "poor Paddy Doyle" is satirical, since it was the poor sailor who actually suffered at the hands of the boarding-house masters, known around the world for their selfish and grasping natures. See, on this subject also, "The Dead Horse" (B4). References: Doerflinger, p. 10; Colcord, p. 43.

"Now this is a song that's just used in the one place...on the...when the men are all together on the yards, one of the lower yards. they call it the main or foreyard...and they're rolling up the sail. They get the sail all ready for the one big bowsing up, and the man in the bunt will sing...

Way ay ay yah,  
We'll all fling dung at the cook!

With that last word, 'cook,' all hands gives a bowse on it, and that hauls the sail up...but you'll never get it up with one pull, so the man sings out then...

Way ay ay yah,  
Who sold poor Paddy Doyle's boots?

And another pull. Well, if it isn't satisfactory, if you want one more...

Way ay ay yah,  
We'll all go down and hang the cook.

Well, if the sail is bowsed up, that's all there is to be said about it...but there's never any more than about six verses to that same song."

B3

PADDY, GET BACK

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

"Paddy, Get Back" is a capstan shanty of rather infrequent appearance. It does not appear in Colcord, and Doerflinger lists only two variants. Apart from the interesting picture it gives of a certain aspect of sea life (the lying shipping-master and the rough mates), it is most valuable, since within the shanty itself recognition is given to the importance of the shanties in promoting unison work. The version which Doerflinger prints is also sung by Richard Maitland, and the present one should be compared with it for the purpose of observing how the same singer will spontaneously vary stanzas and create new ones. Reference Doerflinger, p. 54.

"It's called 'Paddy, Get Back'...

I was broke and out of a job in the city of London,  
I went down the Shadwell docks to get a ship.

Chorus:

Paddy, get back, take in the slack,  
Heave away your capstan, heave a pawl, heave a pawl!  
'Bout ship and stations there be handy,  
Rise, tacks and sheets and mainsail, haul!  
("This is a capstan shanty now...")

There was a Yankee ship a-laying in the basin,  
Oh, they told me she was going to New York.

If I ever lay my hands on that shipping master,  
Oh, I'll murder him if it's the last thing that I do.

When the pilot left the ship way down the channel,  
Oh, the captain told us we were going around Cape Horn.

The mate and second mate belonged to Boston,  
And the captain hailed from Bangor down in Maine.

The three of them were rough and tumble fighters,  
When not fighting amongst themselves, they turned on us.

Oh, they called us out one night to reef the topsails,  
Now with belaying pins a-flying around the deck.

Oh, and we came on deck and went to set the topsails,  
Not a man among the bunch could sing a song.

We had tinkers, we had tailors and firemen, also cooks,  
And they couldn't sing a shanty unless they had the books.

Oh, wasn't that a bunch of hoodlums  
For to take a ship around Cape Horn!

M: "Now this song...I forgot to explain it in the first place...it commences...The solo is sung by the shantyman sitting on the capstan head, where he always does sing...sit in case of singing shanties. The shantyman sits there and does nothing, while the crew, walking around the capstan, are singing. The chorus begins at:

Paddy, get back, take in the slack,  
Heave away the capstan, heave a pawl, heave a pawl,  
'Bout ship and stations there be handy,  
Rise, tacks and sheets and mainsail, haul!

L: "And show us where the pull...where the...comes..."

M: "That's what I'm telling them now. This 'Paddy, get back' is the chorus..."

L: "And that's where they pull?"

M: "There's no pull in a capstan shanty! They're walking around the capstan with the bars!"

B4

#### THE DEAD HORSE

[Sung by Capt. Leighton Robinson at Mill Valley, California, 1951. Recorded by Sam Eskin.]

The "dead horse" referred to in this halyard shanty was the advance in cash paid to the boarding-house master before the sailor shipped to sea. This advance covered the sailor's room and board while he had been waiting for a ship, and also covered the cost of boots, sea clothes, and tobacco supplied him by the boarding-house master. Until this advance had been paid off -- usually a thirty-day advance, but sometimes as high as ninety -- the sailor touched no cash and was working to pay for a "dead horse." When the "dead horse" period had been worked off at sea, the horse was buried with seagoing ceremony, and the captain, in honor of the occasion and to cheer the men, usually issued grog. References: Doerflinger, p. 14; Colcord, p. 63.

"They would get a tar barrel and get 'Chips' to make a horse's head to it, and put a tar brush in the stern of it and for a tail...and then they would mount it on this thing [a sort of cart], and generally the shantyman would get astride of it and, as I say, it being fine weather, why they'd start and pull this thing along the deck. And then the shanty-man would sing the song, what they called 'Poor Old Man' or 'The Burying of the Dead Horse.' Having worked up thirty days, why, then the next day they were going on pay. They were really earning some money then. 'Course they'd be into the slopchest probably for a few beans, but at the same time they'd feel that they'd begun to earn their money. And this is the way that that went..."

A poor old man came riding along,  
And we say so, and we hope so,  
A poor old man comes riding along,  
Oh, poor old man.

Poor old man, your horse he must die,  
And we say so, and we hope so,  
Poor old man, your horse he must die,  
Oh, poor old man.

Thirty days have come and gone.

Now we are on a good month's pay.

I think I hear our old man say.

Give them grog for the thirtieth day.

Up aloft to the main yard arm.

Cut him adrift, and he'll do no harm,  
Oh, we say so, and we hope so,  
Cut him adrift, and he'll do no harm,  
Oh, poor old man.

I might explain to you that we hoisted him up to the main yard arm, and then there was a fellow up there...we generally used the clew garnet, you know, just to hoist him up there, we had to put a strop around the barrel...and then they would just cut him adrift. And then you'd see this old thing floating astern."

B5

JOHNNY BOKER

[Sung by Captain Leighton Robinson at Mill Valley, California, 1951.  
Recorded by Sam Eskin.]

This short-haul shanty has its source in a pre-Civil War minstrel song, and was taken over by sailors because of the short and heavy do! on which a natural pull came. Capt. Robinson, in his shore singing of it, lengthens the do! beyond the normal manner in which it would have been sung at sea. References: Doerflinger, p. 9; Colcord, p. 44.

Oh, do, my Johnny Boker, come rock and roll me over,  
Do, my Johnny Boker, do!

Oh, do, my Johnny Boker, we're bound across to Dover,  
Do, my Johnny Boker, do!

"Well, that's a shanty, of course, when you're taking a drag on the main sheet. You get all hands, say, on deck about the time when you're changing the watches...and you don't want to put a watch tackle (?) on it or take it to a capstan, and it's not blowing too hard, why, you can get a short drag on that and get a little slack in."

A1

## WHEN JONES'S ALE WAS NEW

[Sung by John M. (Sailor Dad) Hunt of Marion, Virginia. Recorded at Washington, D.C., 1941, by John A. Lomax.]

This forecandle song was sung by sailors for entertainment only, either at sea or, more happily, when ashore with a mug of beer and a good crew around a tavern table. Originally a traditional shore song, it had no stanza relating to the sailor, but this oversight was immediately taken care of as soon as it moved to sea. Doerflinger cites a specific instance of its transfer from shore to sea as occurring in 1892, although his reference also indicates that it may have been earlier. "To splice the main brace" is, on ship, to pass out the ration of grog, or, on shore and more generally, simply to drink. In 1941, this song was sung by "Sailor Dad" for President Roosevelt at an entertainment at the White House. References: Doerflinger, p. 168.

There was six jovial tradesmen, they all sat down to drinking,  
 For they were jolly good fellows, and enjoyed their drinking, too.  
 They sat themselves down to be merry, for everyone was gay and jolly,  
 "You're welcome as the hills," says Molly,  
 When Jones's ale was new, my boys, when Jones's ale was new;  
 When the landlord's daughter she came in, and we kissed those rosy  
 cheeks again,

We all sat down and then we'd sing.  
 When Jones's ale was new, my boys, when Jones's ale was new.

Now the first to come in was a soldier, with his knapsack over his  
 shoulder,  
 For none could be more bolder, and his long broadsword he drew;  
 He swore every man should spend a pound, and they should treat all  
 hands around,  
 And he jolly well drank their healths all 'round,  
 When Jones's ale was new...

Now the next to come in was a sailor, with his marlin spike and his  
 sheaver,  
 For none could be more clever among this jovial crew;  
 He called the landlord into the place, and said it was time to splice  
 the main brace,  
 And if he didn't he'd wreck the place,  
 When Jones's ale was new...

Now the next to come in was a tinker, and he was jolly beer-drinker,  
 And he was a jolly beer-drinker among this jovial crew;  
 He mended pots, he mended kettles, his tinker's tools was made of  
 good metal,  
 Good lord, how his hammer and nails would rattle,  
 When Jones's ale was new...

The next to come in was a roaming man, who ground the farmer's wheat  
at the old mill dam,  
Who could drink more beer than Joe McCann, who was one of the jovial  
crew;  
He would whistle and sing the whole day long, and always singing a  
merry old song,  
And at night he'd join this jovial throng,  
When Jones's ale was new...

Now the last to come in was a ragman, with his ragbag over his  
shoulder,  
And none could be more bolder among this jovial crew;  
They called for pots, they called for glasses, they all got drunk  
like old jackasses,  
And they burnt the old ragman's bag to ashes,  
When Jones's ale was new, my boys, when Jones's ale was new;  
Then the landlord's daughter she came in, and we kissed those rosy  
cheeks again,  
We all sat down and then we'd sing  
When Jones's ale was new, my boys, when Jones's ale was new.

A2

BLOW THE MAN DOWN(I)

[Sung by Noble B. Brown at Woodman, Wisconsin, 1946. Recorded by Helene Stratman-Thomas and Aubrey Snyder on a joint field-collecting project for the University of Wisconsin and the Library of Congress.]

This halyard shanty seems to have come into being ca. 1818 with the establishment of the great Black Ball Line of packets sailing between New York and Liverpool, although the Line itself is not mentioned in the two following renditions. The first version, sung by Noble B. Brown, is rather unusual because of the use of "heave away" rather than "to me way hay" in the first chorus line. Also, with the introduction of "heave," the shantyman singing the solo lines creates a humorous double-entendre on the word throughout the song. The second version of the song (of which only three stanzas are given) is the more standard, and finds its ultimate source in a song, "As I Went A-Walking Down Ratcliffe Highway," dating from the 1840's. The word "blow" as used in the chorus of each version meant to "knock" or "strike." Doerflinger points out that the packet sailors called the rough second and third mates "blowers and strikers," the terms being synonymous. References: Doerflinger, p. 17; Colcord, p. 54.

We will pull, we will haul, hearty, healthy, and gay,  
Heave away, away, blow the man down,  
Like husky strong seamen to earn able to pay,  
Oh, give us some time to blow the man down.

We will pull, the commands of our skipper obey,  
Heave away, away, blow the man down,  
We will haul till we hear the command to belay,  
Oh, give us some time to blow the man down.

We'll expend all the energy we can afford,  
We'll joyfully heave the dead horse overboard.

We will heave with all might, we will heave with all main,  
We will heave till the main brace needs splicing again.

We will heave when we're sickened by roughness of sea,  
We will heave when recovering from a big spree.

We will heave when the salt horse and hog becomes rank,  
We will heave for good treatment -- our officers think.

To heave is what seamen should know how to do,  
And sometimes a vessel is forced to heave, too [heave-to].

We'll heave heaving lines to a tender ashore,  
Leave heaving of cargo to strong stevedore.

We will heave everywhere on the world's surface round,  
We will heave the most joyfully when homeward bound.

Blow the man down, bullies, blow the man down,  
Heave away, away, blow the man down,  
We'll heave the most joyfully when homeward bound,  
Oh, give us some time to blow the man down.

A3

BLOW THE MAN DOWN (II)

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York,  
1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

See the preceding note, A2.

As I was a-walking down Paradise Street,  
Way hey, blow the man down,  
A dashing young damsel I chanced for to meet,  
Give me some time to blow the man down.

I hailed her in English, and hailed her all 'round,  
Way hey, blow the man down,  
I hauled up alongside, and asked where she was bound,  
Give me some time to blow the man down.

She'd left the Black Arrow bound for the Shakespere,  
Way hey, blow the man down,  
We went in and had two big glasses of beer,  
Give me some time to blow the man down.

A4

SO HANDY, ME BOYS, SO HANDY

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York,  
1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

This halyard shanty, "So Handy," tells no story, but simply urges the men on to the immediate work in hand. What Maitland has to say about "doubling up" on the pull when the mate is out of humor applies not only to this halyard shanty but to other halyard shanties as well. References: Doerflinger, p. 12; Colcord, p. 76.

Now handy high and handy low,  
Handy, me boys, so handy,  
Oh, it's handy high and away we'll go,  
Handy, me boys, so handy.

Hoist her up from down below,  
Handy, me boys, so handy,  
We'll hoist her up through frost and snow,  
Handy, me boys, so handy.

We'll hoist her up from down below,  
We'll hoist her and show her clew.

One more pull and that will do.  
Oh, we'll sing a song that'll make her go.

Now it's growl you may, but go you must,  
If you growl too much, your head they'll bust.

Now one more pull and then belay,  
And another long pull and we'll call it a day.

Now handy high and handy low,  
Oh, one more pull and we'll send her alow.

We'll hoist her up and show her clew,  
Handy, me boys, so handy,  
And we'll make her go through frost and snow,  
Handy, me boys, so handy.

Lomax: What kind of a shanty is that?

Maitland: Well, that's a pulling shanty. You see where they -- "handy, me boys" -- Is that thing going?

Lomax: Uh-huh.

Maitland: That's a hoisting shanty, it goes--you can either take a single long pull except when the mate is out of humor, and he sings out to "double up, double up," then you take a pull at "handy, me boys, so handy."

Lomax: Was that a very popular shanty?

Maitland: Yes, sure it's very popular!

A5

A LONG TIME AGO

[Sung by Richard Maitland at Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, New York, 1939. Recorded by Alan Lomax.]

This halyard shanty, as well as "Roll the Cotton Down" (B3), would seem to have had its origin in the South, and very possible was transferred to the shanty tradition from the singing of colored stevedores working at the loading of the ships. In the next to the last stanza, the "dollar and a



half is a black man's pay" is more a statement coming from the then underpaid colored stevedore rather than from the better paid white stevedore. In Capt. Robinson's shanty (B3), he omits any invidious wage difference, and also reduces the "white man's pay" to a dollar. Unionization has, of course, wiped out wage differences within industry. References: Doerflinger, p. 37; Colcord, p. 65.

Maitland: Now this is a song that's very popular in the vessels bound across with cotton from Mobile, New Orleans, Savannah, Charleston, any place where they load cotton, and it's usually sang with a gusto when they do sing it.

Way down South where I was born,  
Way ay ay yah,  
I've picked the cotton and hoed the corn,  
Oh a long time ago.

In the good old State of Alabam',  
Way ay ay yah,  
So I've packed my bag, and I'm going away,  
Oh a long time ago.

When I was young and in my prime,  
Oh, I served my time in the Black Ball Line.

I'm going away to Mobile Bay,  
Where they screw the cotton by the day.

Five dollars a day's a white man's pay,  
And a dollar and a half is a black man's pay.

When the ship is loaded, I'm going to sea,  
Way ay ay yah,  
For a sailor's life is the life for me,  
Oh a long time ago.

B1

#### RIO GRANDE

[Sung by Captain Leighton Robinson, as shantyman, and Alex Barr, Arthur Brodeur, and Leighton McKenzie at Belvedere, California, 1939. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell.]

"Rio Grande" is one of the great outward-bound capstan shanties, sung as the men were heaving up anchor prior to leaving for the outward voyage. The Rio Grande referred to is not the Texas-Mexican river, but the port of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, a favorite with sailors the world over. References: Doerflinger, p. 64; Colcord, p. 86.

Oh, Rio Grande lies far away,  
"Way Rio!  
Oh, Rio Grande lies far away,  
And we're bound for the Rio Grande.

Chorus:

And away Rio, it's away Rio!  
Singing fare you well, my bonny young girl,  
And we're bound for the Rio Grande.

I thought I heard our old man say,  
'Way Rio!  
I thought I heard our old man say,  
"We're bound for the Rio Grande."

Two dollars a day is a sailor's pay.

So it's pack up your donkey, and get under way.

Oh, I left my old woman a month's half pay.

So heave up our anchor, away we must go,  
Away Rio!  
Oh, heave up our anchor, away we must go,  
And we're bound for the Rio Grande.

B2

#### WHISKY JOHNNY

[Sung by Captain Leighton Robinson, as shantyman, and Alex Barr, Arthur Brodeur, and Leighton McKenzie at Belvedere, California, 1939. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell.]

This halyard shanty was a great favorite, and frequently sung with an eye to the skipper, with the hope that he would pass out a ration of grog. The men were also realists in their stanzas, and, while wanting the whisky left behind on shore, recognized the scrapes and troubles which whisky often brought them. References: Doerflinger, p. 14; Colcord, p. 49.

Oh, whisky here, and whisky there,  
Whisky Johnny,  
Oh, whisky here, and whisky there,  
Oh, whisky for my Johnny,

Oh, I'll drink whisky when I can,  
Whisky Johnny,  
Oh, I'll drink whisky while I can,  
Oh, whisky for my Johnny.

Oh, whisky gave me a broken nose.

And whisky made me pawn my clothes.

Oh, if whisky were a river, and I were a duck.

I'd swim around till I got right drunk.

Oh, whisky landed me in jail.

Oh, whisky in and old tin pail.  
Whisky Johnny,  
Oh, whisky in an old tin pail,  
Oh, whisky for my Johnny.

[Sung by Captain Leighton Robinson, as shantyman, and Alex Barr, Arthur Brodeur, and Leighton McKenzie at Belvedere, California, 1939. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell.]

See the note for "A Long Time Ago," A5.

Oh, away down South where I was born,  
Oh, roll the cotton down,  
Away down South where I was born,  
Oh, roll the cotton down.

A dollar a day is the white man's pay,  
Oh, roll the cotton down,  
Oh, a dollar a day is the white man's pay,  
Oh, roll the cotton down.

I thought I heard our old man say.

We're homeward bound to Mobile Bay.

Oh, hoist away that yard and sing,  
Oh, roll the cotton down,  
Oh, hoist away that yard and sing,  
Oh, roll the cotton down.

"That's enough."

[Sung by Captain Leighton Robinson, as shantyman, and Alex Barr, Arthur Brodeur, and Leighton McKenzie at Belvedere, California, 1939. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell.]

Usually classified as a forecastle song and not a shanty, the words of the opening stanzas indicate the specific capstan shanty use to which "Rolling Home" was also put. Captain Robinson's "'Vast heaving!" at the end bears this out also. Doerflinger cites various authorities, including John Masefield, to confirm this. "Rolling Home" was the sailors' farewell to the foreign land they were leaving for the homeward voyage, usually sung on British vessels bound from Australia to England, although easily adapted by American sailormen to their own land. References: Doerflinger, p. 155; R. W. Gordon, Adventure Magazine, Jan. 10, 1925, p. 191 for Charles Mackay's original poem, "Rolling Home" (1858) upon which the shanty is probably based.

Pipe all hands to man the windlass, see our cable run down clear,  
As we heave away our anchor, for old England's shores we'll steer.

Chorus:

Rolling home, rolling home, rolling home across the sea,  
Rolling home to merry England, rolling home, dear land, to thee.

Man your bars, heave with a will, lads, every hand that can clap on,  
As we heave away our anchor, we will sing this well known song.

Fare you well Australia's daughters, fare you well sweet foreign shore,  
For we're bound across the waters, homeward bound again once more.

Up aloft amongst the rigging, where the stormy winds do blow,  
Oh, the waves as they rush past us seem to murmur as they go.

Twice ten thousand miles before us, twice ten thousand miles we've  
gone.  
Oh, the girls in dear old England gaily call us way along.

"'Vast heaving!"

B5

HOMeward BOUND

[Sung by Captain Leighton Robinson, as shantyman, and Alex Barr, Arthur Brodeur, and Leighton McKenzie at Belvedere, California, 1939. Recorded by Sidney Robertson Cowell.]

The last capstan shanty on these two long-playing records is appropriately enough a homeward-bound one and so named, although it also bears the title "Goodbye, Fare You Well." Originally English in origin, it becomes, with the reference to "'Frisco," not only American but Californian as well. References: Doerflinger, p. 87; Colcord, p. 113.

We're homeward bound, I hear them say,  
Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well,  
We're homeward bound, I hear them say,  
Hurrah, my boys, we're homeward bound.

We're homeward bound this very day,  
Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well,  
We're homeward bound this very day,  
Hurrah, my boys, we're homeward bound.

We're homeward bound for 'Frisco town.

Oh, heave away, she's up and down.

Our anchor, boys, we soon will see.

We're homeward bound, 'tis a joyous sound.

Oh, I thought I heard our old man say.

Oh, 'Frisco Bay in three months and a day.

Oh, those 'Frisco girls they have got us in tow.

And it's goodbye to Katie and goodnight to Nell.

Oh, it's goodbye again and fare you well.

And now I hear our first mate say.

We've got the fluke at last in sight,  
Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well,  
We've got the fluke at last in sight,  
Hurrah, my boys, we're homeward bound.

"'Vast heaving!"