

# SEA CHANTEYS

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## ◆ INTRODUCTION

A common tradition among sailors was to sing sea chanteys while they were working. Whether they were hauling on a line, heaving around the capstan or working up in the rigging, songs were quite often belted out by the crew. Singing allowed the sailors to work together as a team. It kept them in rhythm and working at the same pace. Songs also kept the men focused on what they were doing. Lives would be lost if one man wasn't paying attention, even if just for a split second.

There are many different sea chanteys; each one created for a specific type of work done aboard a square-rigger. These different chanteys had a unique rhythm for the type of work at hand, example; a *capstan chantey* has more of a marching cadence for walking around the capstan - a *hauling chantey* was designed to coordinate the sailors to haul together on certain words. There are also fore-castle or fo'c'sle chanteys, which are songs, sung for pleasure and not necessarily sung while doing work.

You will find a collection of sea chanteys either as MP3's through our website, or via CD from the Education Department. It is highly recommended that you become familiar with some of these songs before your ship sets sail. The title tracks indicate appropriate songs for your program by year.

### **Important Notice!**

If you received a CD from the Education Department, please keep in mind that this CD can only be loaned to you. You must bring it back with you the day of your program. If it is not returned, a twenty-five dollar charge will be billed to your group. Please do not duplicate this CD. We have been given special permission for the use of these songs.

This album is a great asset to these programs but would not have been possible without the support of three local musical groups. Our thanks go out to each one of these groups for their cooperation and support of this educational project. Two of the following groups have multiple productions that are for sale in the Maritime Museum gift shop.

### **SOURCES:**

*San Francisco SHANTIES and Sea Songs of California Gold Rush*  
Holdstock and Murphy 1996

*GO TO SEA ONCE MORE*  
Jackstraws 1993

*HAUL AND SING*  
Johnny Walker and the Crew of the Brig Pilgrim 1989

◆ **THE CHALLENGE**

Learn the verses to as many of the attached sea chanteys and practice them for your voyage aboard the *Euterpe*.

*“Windship sailors lived with music. . . a rough kind they made themselves, more often than not. . . “*

Christmas at Sea, Captain Fred K. Klebingat

**Sea Chantey CD**

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>PROGRAM YEAR</u>
1. Drunken Sailor	Haul and Sing	1851 & 1874
2. John Kanaka	Shanties	1851 & 1874
3. Roll the Ole’ Chariot	Haul and Sing	1851 & 1874
4. Strike the Bell	Haul and Sing	1851 & 1874
5. Leave Her Johnney	Jackstraws	1851 & 1874
6. Haul Away Joe	Haul and Sing	1851 & 1874
7. Homeward Bound	Shanties	1851
8. Leaving of Liverpool	Jackstraws	1874
9. Oh California	Shanties	1851
10. Away for Rio	Jackstraws	1851 & 1874
11. Sacramento	Jackstraws	1851
12. Santy Ano	Jackstraws	1851
13. Euterpe Waltz	Jackstraws	1874
14. Ripping Trip	Shanties	1851

1. DRUNKEN SAILOR

What’s to do with a drunken sailor,  
 What’s to do with a drunken sailor,  
 What’s to do with a drunken sailor  
 Early in the morning.

Chorus:

Way-ay up she rises,  
 Way-ay up she rises,  
 Way-ay up she rises early in the morning.

Put him in the scuppers with a hosepipe on him.....

Shave his belly with a rusty razor.....

Put him in the bilge and make him drink it.....

Tie him to the topmasts when she’s yardarm under.....

That’s what we do with a drunken sailor.....

Temperance lectures will never save him.....

## 2. . JOHN KANAKA

I thought I heard the old man say  
*John Kanaka-naka tuliae*  
There's work tomorrow but no work today  
*John Kanaka-naka tuliae*

Chorus:  
*Tuliae oh tuliae*  
*John Kanaka -naka tuliae.*

We're bound away from London Bay  
*John Kanaka-naka tuliae*  
We're bound away at the break of day  
*John Kanaka-naka tuliae*

It's just one thing that grieves my mind ....  
To leave my wife and child behind .....

They'll wave farewell down on the quay ....  
To wait and fear and weep for me ....

We're bound away around Cape Horn ....  
Where you wish to Christ you'd never been born ....

The bosun said before I'm through ....  
You'll curse your mother for having you ....

It's rotten wheat and weevily bread ....  
And its pump or drown the old man said ....

It's one more pull and that'll do ....  
And we're the bullies for to pull her through ....

## 3. ROLL THE CHARIOT

Chorus:  
*So we'll roll the old chariot along,*  
*We'll roll the old chariot along,*  
*We'll roll the old chariot along*  
*And we'll all hang on behind.*

Why a drop of Nelsons blood wouldn't do us any harm,  
A drop of Nelsons blood wouldn't do us any harm,  
A drop of Nelsons blood wouldn't do us any harm  
And we'll all hang on behind.

Why a quiet watch below wouldn't do us any harm.....

A good featherbed wouldn't do us any harm.....

Yes, a nice Irish stew wouldn't do us any harm.....

Why a night with the girls wouldn't do us any harm...

Yes a trip on the Euterpe wouldn't do us any harm...

## 4. STRIKE THE BELL

Aft on the poop deck walking about,  
There's the second mate so steady and so stout.  
What he is a thinking of he doesn't know himself.  
We wish that he would hurry up and strike,  
strike the bell.

Chorus:  
*Strike the bell second mate let's go below.*  
*Look well to windward you can see it's going to blow.*  
*Look at the glass and you can see that it is fell.*  
*We wish that you would hurry up and strike,*  
strike the bell.

Down on the main deck, working at the pumps,  
There's the larboard watch a ready for their bunks.  
Looking out to windward they see a great swell,  
They're wishing that the second mate would strike,  
strike the bell.

Aft at the wheel poor Anderson stands  
Grasping the spokes with his cold mittened hands.  
Looking at the compass oh the course is clear as hell.  
He is wishing that the second mate would strike,  
strike the bell.

Forward on the focsil head they're keeping sharp lookout.  
Young Johnny standing, ready for to shout.  
Lamps are burning bright sir and everything is well,  
We're wishing that the second mate would strike,  
strike the bell.

Aft on the quarterdeck, a gallant captain stands  
Looking out to windward, a spyglass in his hands.  
What he is a thinking of we know very well.  
He's thinking more of shortening sail than  
striking the bell.

## 5. LEAVE HER JOHNNY

Well the voyage was rough and the wages was low  
*Leave her Johnny leave her*  
But now it's done and it's a time to go  
*And its time for us to leave her*

Chorus:  
*Leave her Johnny leave her.*  
*Oh leave her Johnny leave her.*  
*For the voyage is done and the winds don't blow*  
*And its time for us to leave her.*

She would not sail nor steer nor stay. ....

She braved high seas both the night and day .....

Yes its time for us to say goodbye .....  
For the old dear land she's a drying eye .....

#### 6. HAUL AWAY JOE

When I was a little lad or so me mammy told me  
*Way haul away we'll haul away Joe*  
That if I didn't kiss the girls my lips would all grow  
moldy  
*Way haul away we'll haul away Joe*

Why King Louie was the king of France before the  
revolution .....

And then he got his head cut off which spoiled the  
constitution .....

Well once I was in Ireland digging turf and taters .....

But now I'm on a British ship hauling on the braces

Once I had a German girl but she was fat and lazy .....

Then I got an English gal- she nearly drove me crazy

The cook is in the galley making duff so handy .....

The captain's in his cabin drinking wine and brandy

Way haul away we'll haul for better weather .....

Yes, way haul away- we'll all haul together .....

#### 7. HOMEWARD BOUND

"We're homeward bound," I heard them say,  
*Goodbye fare you well, Goodbye fare you well !*  
We're homeward bound this very day,  
*Hurrah me boys, we're homeward bound !*

We're homeward bound for 'Frisco Bay,  
*Goodbye fare you well, Goodbye fare you well !*  
To 'Frisco Bay in three months and a day.  
*Hurrah me boys, we're homeward bound !*

Oh heave a way she's up and down, ....  
We're homeward bound, it's a joyous sound .....

I thought I heard the old man say, .....

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

Them 'Frisco girls has got us in tow, ....  
We'll haul away, and roll and go .....

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

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

And now I hear our first mate say, .....

"It's one more pull, and then belay !" .....

#### 8. LEAVING OF LIVERPOOL

Farewell to you my own true love,  
I am going far away.  
I am bound for Californio  
And I know that I'll return some day

Chorus:

*So, fare ye well my own true love*  
*And when I return united we will be.*  
*It's not the leaving of Liverpool that grieves me*  
*But my darling when I think of thee.*

I have shipped seven years on a sailing ship  
Davey Crockett is her name.  
And John Burgess is the captain of her  
And they say that she's a floating shame

Oh the drums are beating loud my love  
And I wish I could remain  
But I know it will be such a long, long time  
Before I see you again.

9. OH CALIFORNIA

Came from Salem city  
with a washbowl on my knee,  
I'm going to California,  
the gold dust for to see!  
It rained all night the day I left,  
the weather it was dry.  
The sun's so hot I froze to death,  
oh brothers don't you cry!

Chorus:

*Oh California!*  
*That's the land for me!*  
*I'm off to San Francisco*  
*With a washbowl on my knee!*

I jumped on board the *Lisa* ship  
and traveled o'er the sea,  
And every time I thought of home  
I wished it wasn't me!  
The vessel reared like any horse  
that had of oats a wealth,  
I found it wouldn't throw me,  
so I thought I'd throw myself!

I thought of all the pleasant times  
we've had together here,  
I thought I ought to cry a bit  
but couldn't shed a tear.  
The pilot's bread was in my mouth,  
the gold dust in my eye,  
Although I'm going far away,  
dear brothers don't you cry!

And when I get to 'Frisco boys,  
it's then I'll look around,  
And when I see the gold lumps there,  
I'll pick them off the ground.  
We'll scrape the mountains clean, me boys,  
we'll drain the rivers dry!  
A pocket full of rocks bring home,  
Oh brothers don't you cry!

10. RIO GRANDE /SAILORS HORNPIPE

I'll sing you a song, a good song of the sea.  
*Away Rio*  
I'll sing you a song if you'll sing it with me.  
*We are bound for the Rio Grand*

Chorus:

*And it's away bullies away yeh!*  
*Away Rio.*  
*It's fare ya' well ya' pretty young girls,*  
*We are bound for the Rio Grande.*

We'll man the good capstan and run her around....  
We'll haul up the anchor to this jolly song.....

Well the anchors away and the sails they are set ....  
And the girls we are leaving we'll never forget ....

So its goodbye to Sally and goodbye to Sue .....  
And them that's a listening its farewell to you .....

11. BANKS OF THE SACRAMENTO

It's a bully ship and a bully crew  
*With a ho down, ho down*  
And we're the boys to put her through  
*With a ho down, ho down hey.*

Chorus:

*So blow boys blow*  
*For Californio*  
*There's plenty of gold so I've been told,*  
*On the banks of the Sacramento.*

It's round that capstan we must go  
*With a ho down, ho down*  
To hoist the anchor from below  
*With a ho down, ho down hey.*

And when we wallop around Cape Horn ....  
You'll wish to God you'd never been born .....

When we get 'round to 'Frisco town ....  
My dear stay clear of Shanghai Brown ....

I thought I heard our Captain say .....  
Those 'Frisco girls will steal your pay ....

She would not steer, she would not stay .....

She sailed high seas both night and day ....

I thought I heard our Bosun say ....

Just one more turn and then belay .....

12. SANTY ANO

We're sailing on the river from Liverpool

*Heave Away, Santy Ano*

'Round Cape Horn to 'Frisco Bay

*All along the plains of Mexico*

Chorus:

*So heave her up and away we'll go.*

*Heave away Santy Ano.*

*Heave her up and away we'll go,*

*All along the plains of Mexico.*

She's a good, fast clipper with a bully good crew

*Heave Away, Santy Ano*

A down East Yankee for a captain too

*All along the plains of Mexico*

There's plenty of gold, so I've been told ....

Way out west in Californ-i-o. ....

Back in the days of '49 ....

Oh those were the days of the good old times .....

When Zachariah Taylor gained the day .....

He made poor Santy run away ....

General Scott and Taylor too ....

They made poor Santy meet his water doom ....

Santy Ana was a good old man ....

'Till he got in the war with your Uncle Sam ....

13. EUTERPE WALTZ

14. A RIPPING TRIP

( ) = pop

You go aboard a leaky boat

and sail for San Francisco,

You've got to pump to keep her afloat ( )

you have that by jingo.!

The engine soon begins to squeak,

but nary a thing to oil her,  
Impossible to stop the leak, ( )  
rip goes the boiler!

The captain on the promenade,  
looking very savage;

The steward and the cabin maid ( )  
fighting 'bout a cabbage.

All about the cabin floor,  
passengers lie sick oh!

Steamers bound to go ashore, ( )  
rip goes the physic!

"Pork and beans" they can't afford,  
for second cabin passengers;

The cook is tumbled overboard ( )  
with 40 pounds of "sassadors";

The engineers' a little tight,  
bragging on the main line,

Finally gets in a fight, ( )  
rip goes the engine!

Cholera begins to rage,  
a few have got the scurvy;

Chickens dying in their cage, ( )  
steerage topsy-turvy.

When you get to Panama,  
agents want a back-load;

Officers begin to jaw, ( )  
rip goes the railroad!

When home, you'll tell an awful tale,  
and always will be thinking,

How long you had to pump and bail, ( )  
to keep the tub from sinking.

Of course you'll have a glass of gin,  
that'll make you feel so funny;

Some city shark will rope you in ( )  
rip goes your money!

Dah dah da dah dah.

**Glossary of words to be found on chantey tape:**

<i>Belay:</i>	The operation of making fast a rope by taking turns with it around a cleat or a belaying pin.
<i>Boatswain:</i>	(Bosun) The officer in charge of sails, rigging, anchors, etc. In charge of all maintenance.
<i>Braces:</i>	Ropes attached to the ends of the yards so the yard can be swung at different angles.
<i>Capstan:</i>	A cylindrical barrel fitted in larger ships. Provides mechanical advantage when working with heavier items such as the anchor, sails and yards. Worked by manpower through the use of capstan bars.
<i>Duff:</i>	A type of dessert that sailors would eat while out at sea. Usually consisted of a mixture of flour, water and a little molasses.
<i>Halyard:</i>	The ropes used to hoist or lower object such as sails, cargo, etc. aboard a ship.
<i>Hawse:</i>	That part of a ship's bow where the hawseholes and hawsepipes are situated through which the anchor cables pass.
<i>Hawsepipe:</i>	The inclined pipe or tube which leads from the hawsehole of a ship, on the deck close to the bow, to the outside of the vessel.
<i>Nightingale:</i>	Someone in the crew who knows the chanteys and can lead the crew in singing.
<i>Scuppers:</i>	Drainage holes cut through the bulkheads of a ship on the waterways to allow any water on the deck to drain away down the ship's side.
<i>Scurvy:</i>	A disease that sailors would often get due to a lack of vitamin C.

*"Striking the Bell":*

The ringing of the bell.

*Topmast:*

In sailing vessels, the mast next above the lower mast, the second division of a complete mast.

*Watch:*

The division of the 24 hours of the seaman's day into periods of duty of 4 hours. Thus, there would be six 4-hour watches in a day.

*Weevils:*

Small bugs that sailors would quite often find living in their hardtack.

*Windward:*

The weather side, or that from which the wind blows. Opposite of leeward.

*Yardarm:*

The outer quarters of a yard.

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