

## Hanging Johnny

1. They call me Hangin' Johnny,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
They say I hangs for money  
**So hang, boys, hang!**
2. They say I hanged me mother,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
Me sistyers and me brothers  
**So hang, boys, hang!**
3. They say I hanged me granny,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
I'd hang the whole damn fam'ly  
**So hang, boys, hang!**
4. They say I hanged copper,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
I gave him the long dropper!  
**So hang, boys, hang!**
5. I'd hang the skipper and me mates,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
All on the devil's gates  
**So hang, boys, hang!**
6. I never hangs for money,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
'Cause hangin's bloody funny!  
**So hang, boys, hang!**
7. They call me Hangin' Johnny,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
They call me Hangin' Johnny.  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

The Jolly Rogers sing this version at  
<https://youtu.be/c1dbzNqEz0E>

Additional verses, hanging anyone that came to mind, would be added to make the song last as long as the job took. Here are some popular ones

A rope, a beam, a ladder,  
I'll hang you all together

I'd hang the mates and skippers,  
I'd hang 'em by their flippers

We'll hang you all together  
We'll haul for better weather.  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

### Notes:

A **halyard** shanty - usually on a t'gallant halyard  
For hauling on a rope ... obviously!

When used for slow long hoists, Hanging Johnny would be sung slowly. If used for faster hauling it would be sung faster.

Stan Hugill, 1994, *Shanties from the Seven Seas*:

Hanging Johnny was usually sung at t'gallant halyards and it had one theme only. Stringing-out was common in a long hoist. Sentimental verses like some collectors give you are never sung – Sailor John hanged any person or thing he would think about without a qualm.

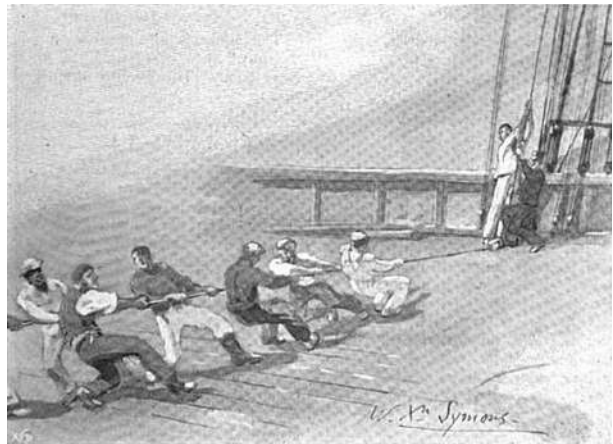
### About the words

**Away boys away** - also rendered as Hooray boys hooray, Hooraw boys hooraw, Away-I-oh, Hooway-ay hay ay,

**Long Dropper** - the [long drop](#) was a specific hanging method.

It was introduced in Britain in 1872, where instead of everyone falling the same distance, a person's height and weight were used to determine the slack needed for a drop length which would ensure the neck was broken.

**Flippers** - hands



**W Symons, Illustration of sailors hauling on halyard, from an article on sailor chanteys.**  
From J E Patterson, "Sailors' Work Songs."  
Good Words 41(28) (June 1900): 391-397,  
via [wikimedia commons](#).