

John, come tell us as we haul away

1. From Liverpool town we sailed away
John come tell us as we haul away
Outward bound at the break of day.
John come tell us as we haul away

Way, hey, hauley!
John come tell us as we haul away

2. Was you ever down in Mobile Bay?
John come tell us as we haul away
Screwing cotton all the day?
John come tell us as we haul away

Way, hey, hauley!
John come tell us as we haul away

3. Of yes I've been down Mobile Bay,
So he's tellin' as we haul away
Screwing cotton all the day.
So he's tellin' as we haul away!

4. And what did you see down in
Mobile Bay?
John come tell us as we haul away
Where the gals are free and gay
John come tell us as we haul away

5. This I saw in Mobile Bay
So he's tellin' as we haul away
A spanking gal in a hammock lay
So he's tellin' as we haul away!

6. And what did you do down in
Mobile Bay?
John come tell us as we haul away
Did you give that flash tart all your
pay?
John come tell us as we haul away

7. I spent it all on Saucy May
So he's tellin' as we haul away!
She was tall and fine and had lots
to say
So he's tellin' as we haul away!

Way, hey, hauley
So he's tellin' as we haul away!

This version, sung by the **Foo Foo Band** at https://youtu.be/EJzVUvhD_40 is mostly **Hugill's** version

Notes:

Used at **halyards** (haul away), **capstan** (heave away), **pumps** (pump away), possibly also for **stamp 'n' go / walkaway** .

Alternative Titles: John come tell us as we haul away, Mobile Bay

Probably started as a cotton hoosier's song, from a negro source. ... Like many shanties this has several non-drawing-room verses [**Hugill**].

Notes on the words:

Mobile Bay - normally pronounced Mobeel Bay - is in Alabama. down to the gulf of Mexico. There is plenty of historical information at www.worldatlas.com/bays/mobile-bay.html



View of the Middle Bay Lighthouse in Mobile Bay, Alabama, 2008, taken from aboard the *MS Holiday* by [Altairisfar](#).

From [wikimedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Bay_Light). See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_Bay_Light