

## Hangin' Johnny

They call me Hangin' Johnny,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
'Cause I hang anybody  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

Oh first I hanged me mother,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
And then I hanged me brother  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

Oh then I hanged me granny,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
I strung her up so canny  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

I'd hang the bleedin' copper,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
I'd give him the long dropper  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

I'd hang all mates and skippers,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
I'd hang 'em by their flippers  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

I'd hang the bleedin' Bosun  
**Away, boys, away!**

### Notes:

A **halyard** shanty - usually on a t'gallant halyard

For hauling on a rope ... obviously!

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

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

Hangin' 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.

### Notes on the words

**Away boys away** - variously rendered eg Hooray boys hooray, Hooraw boys hooraw, Away-l-oh, Hooway-ay hay ay,

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

The dirty rotten whore-son  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

A rope, a beam, a ladder,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
I'll hang you all together  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

They says I hangs for money,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
But hangin' isn't funny  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

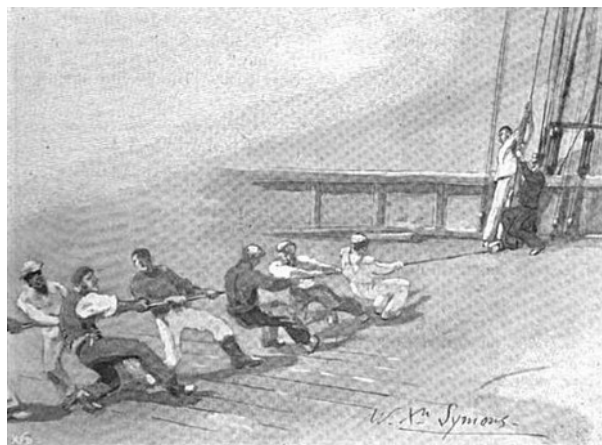
We'll hang you all together  
**Away, boys, away!**  
We'll haul for better weather  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

They call me Hangin' Johnny,  
**Away, boys, away!**  
'Cause I hangs anybody  
**So hang, boys, hang!**

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

needed for a drop length which would ensure the neck was broken.

**Flippers** - hands



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