

Huckleberry Hunting

1. I am a shantyman of the wild goose
nation,
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
I'll sing you a song all about the old
plantation.
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

2. When the boys and the girls went
a-huckleberry huntin'
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
The little girl she cried when the boy he
started courting.
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

3. Well the little girl ran off, the little boy
ran after,
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
The little girl fell down and he saw her
little garter!
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

4. He said: I'll be your beau,
if you'll let be me your feller,
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
She said I got a sweetheart and his name
is Jackie Miller.
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

5. He pulled her on this knee, he kissed
her hard and proper,
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
She kissed him back and he didn't try
to stop her
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

6. Then he put his arm all around
her waspy waist
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
She said: Young man, oh don't you be
in such haste!
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

7. Then he put his hand all upon her
knee
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
She said: Young man, oh don't you be
quite so free.
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

8. Then he put his hand upon her thigh
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
She said: Young man, don't you think
that rather high?
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

9. Then he put his hand yet higher still
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
She said: Young man man, oh that gives
me quite a thrill.
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

10. I am a shanty man of this here
working party.
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
Pull hard, and sing hard, we'll do it
good and hearty
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

11. I'll sing you a song all about the old
plantation
**To me Way, to me Hey, to me He
away!**
When the boys and the girls went
a-huckleberry hunting.
And sing Hilo, me Ranzo Ray!

Recorded by: **Portsmouth Shantymen** on
CD: *Bung up and Bilge Free*,

Hear a version without verse 1 by **Animé
Shanties** at [https://youtu.be/i3rLvH1_uHU?
t=24](https://youtu.be/i3rLvH1_uHU?t=24)

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Notes:

Halyard, pump, windlass, or (Hugill) "almost any task"

Alternative Titles: Huckleberry Hunting, Ranzo Ray, We'll Ranzo Way, Wild Goose Nation,

Not to be confused with other shanties about Ranzo, or the *Wild Goose Shanty*, which is different again.

Doerflinger, William Main, 1994, *Songs of the Sailor and Lumbermen:*

... a shanty often sung at the pumps as well as the halyards. It probably originated with American Negro sailors, those gifted and inventive shantymen, in so far as its general pattern, tune and refrain are concerned.

Judging by the allusion to courting while picking huckleberries, the solos may have originated with white sailormen - quite likely with men hailing from along the coast of New England.

Notes on the words

Wild Goose Nation - debatable

Hilo - appearing in many shanties, Hilo is a port in Chile

Ranzo Ray - appears in many shanties, perhaps a man's name

To me - introduces the chorus in many shanties, often written as **timme**.



Gilray, James, 1797, *A corner, near the bank - or an example for fathers*, [National Portrait Gallery](#) (via [wikimedia.org](#))



Prostitutes Caricature, 1787, "Retail traders not affected by the shop tax". Created for the proprietor by **E. Macklew**, No. 9 Haymarket & **W. Moore**, No. 48 New Bond Street. Now in **US Library of Congress**, via [wikimedia.org](#)