

## Whisky Johnnie

1. 1. Oh, whisky is the life of man  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
Whiskey from an old tin can  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

Whisky straight and whisky strong  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
I'll drink whisky all day long.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

Whisky hot and whisky cold  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
Whisky new and whisky old.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

If whisky comes too near my nose  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
I tip her up and down she goes.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

I wish I knew where whisky grew  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
I'd eat the leaves and the branches too.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

If the sea was whisky & I could swim  
**Whisky! Johnny!**

I'd say "here goes" & dive right in  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

I thought I heard the old man say  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
"I'll treat my crew in a decent way.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

A glass of grog for every man  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
A bottle full for the shantyman."  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

Whisky made me pawn my clothes  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
Whisky gave me this red nose.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

Whisky took my brains away  
**Whisky! Johnny!**  
The old man calls and I'll Belay.  
**Here's whisky for me Johnny!**

This is my version.  
Hear a shorter version by **Bob Roberts** at  
<https://youtu.be/YPOcx59qmlw>.



Patterson, 1932, *Sailors Hauling a line*, on board the Parma  
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, via [wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Patterson_1932_Sailors_Hauling_a_line)

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### Notes

#### A Halyard Shanty

**Other names:** Whisky for me Johnnie, Whisky is my Johnnie, Whisky Johnnie, Whisky Johnnie O

According to **Shipping Wonders of the World:** "Hauling on the topsail halyards was a heavy job, and the halyards were often taken to the capstan" as shown in the photograph overleaf.

Sometimes the shanties went with such a swing

1. "Morn', Mr Fisherman"; "Morn' " says he,  
**Whisky, Johnnie**  
"Ha' you got a crayfish to sell to me?"  
**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**
2. "Oh yes", says he, "I have got two,  
**Whisky, Johnnie**  
One for me and th' other for you."  
**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**
3. I took the crayfish home but I couldn't  
find a dish  
**Whisky, Johnnie**  
I put it in the place where me missus used  
to piss.  
**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**
4. Early next morning, as you may guess,  
**Whisky, Johnnie**  
The missus got up for an early piss.  
**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**
5. The missus gave a howl, a groan and a  
grunt,



A crayfish ([wikimedia](#))

that the officer of the watch had to be careful to see that nothing aloft was carried away."

#### Notes on the words:

Stan Hugill, *Shanties from the Seven Seas*, 1994, gives four versions of Whisky Johnnie, from 30 verses down to eight; together they take four pages of his book. I do not have recording that matches any of these. Below is the fourth version (d). I've put back *some* of the words Hugill had to change:

#### Whisky, Johnnie

She danced around the room with the  
crayfish on her snout.

**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**

6. I grabbed a scrubber - the Missus  
grabbed a broom

#### Whisky, Johnnie

We chased the bloomin' crayfish round and  
round the room.

**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**

7. We hit it on the head, we hit it on the  
side,

#### Whisky, Johnnie

We hit the blooming crayfish until the  
blighter died.

**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**

8. The end of my story – the moral is this  
**Whisky, Johnnie**

Always have a look-see before you have a  
piss.

**There's whisky for me Johnnie.**



A chamber pot ([wikimedia](#))