

Santianna

Antonio Lopez de Santa Aña, far from “gaining the day” as this pump or capstan shanty suggests, was defeated by General Taylor at Buena Vista in February 1847, in one of the decisive battles of the war between Mexico and the United States. Many British sailors deserted their ships to join Santa Aña's army, and perhaps it was affection for the Mexican seaports that made the shanty singers reverse the run of history in their songs.

Oh, Santianna gained the day
Hooray Santianna
And General Taylor ran away
All on the plains of Mexico

Yes General Taylor ran away
He ran away at Monterey

He was a haughty general
A rorty torty general

Chorus
So heave her up and away we go
Hooray Santianna
Heave her up and away we go
All on the plains of Mexico

Santianna had a wooden leg
He used it as a cribbage peg

Them pretty girls I do adore
Their shining eyes and long black hair

Them Liverpool girls don't use no combs
They brush their hair with a herring's back bone

Chorus

<more>

When I was young and in me prime
I had them pretty girls two at a time

Why did those pretty girls love me so?
'Cos I did not tell them all I know

But now I'm old and withered and bent
I regret the happy hours I spent

Chorus