

Key: Any

Genre: Folk


Harp Type: Diatonic

Skill: Any

## Johnny Come Down to Hilo

Here is an American Sailors sea shanty associated to the windlass and capstan winding. I learnt this in my primary schooling in the 50's and have since found there are many versions, some of a more ribald nature. This version is not what would be called P.C now days for which I apologise but this is how it would have been sung. The writer on the subject, Frank Bullen, has memories of it being sung and hearing it on "a dewy morning in the Garden keach where we lay just off the King of Oudh's palace awaiting our permit to moor. I was before the mast in one of Bates' ships, the Herat, and when

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the order  
came at dawn to man the windlass I raised this shanty and my  
shipmates  
sang the chorus as I never heard it sung before or since;  
sometimes,  
even now, I can in fancy hear it's mellow notes reverberating  
amid the  
fantastic buildings of the palace and see the great flocks of  
pigeons  
rising and falling as the strange sounds disturbed them."

Time sig; 2/4

7 -6 -6 -6 -6 6 7 -6 -6 -6 7 -7

I ne-ver see the like since/ I been born when a/

-6 6 5 -4 4 6 5 4 -3" 3

big buck nig\*a with his/ sea boots on says/

4 4 4 4~~ 5 -6 6 5 -4 4 7

"John-ny come down to/Hi-lo poor old man Oh/

Chorus;


-6 6 7 -6 6 7 -6 6 5 4 7

Wake her oh/shake her oh/wake that girl with the/

5 4 -3" 3

blue dress on oh/

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4 4 4 4 5 -6 6 5 -4 4

John-ny come down to/Hi-lo/poor old man/

v.2 I love a little girl across the sea,  
she's a Badian beauty, and she says to me,  
"Oh! Johnny come down to Hilo,  
poor old man"

Chorus;

v.3 O, was you ever down in Mobile Bay,  
where they screws cotton on a summer day?  
when Johnny comes down to Hilo,  
poor old man!

Chorus;


v.4 Have you ever seen the old Plantation boss  
with the long tailed filly and the big  
black hoss?

When Johnny come down to Hilo,  
poor old man!

Chorus;

I never seen the like since I been born,  
When a big buck nig\*a with his sea boots on,  
says " Johnny come down to Hilo,  
poor old man!"

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# Lyrics

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