

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

Them little 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 kipper's back bone

When I was young and in me prime

I had them little girls two at a time

Why did those little 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