

Boatman dance, boatman sing

<https://riverofsong.uk/>

This stevedore river song was written in the early 1800s by Daniel Decatur Emmett and in the folk tradition has spawned many versions including banjo and other instrumentals, a lovely one is by Elizabeth Cotten. A version can be found in BBC radio 'Singing Together' Summer 1969.



Boat - man dance, boat - man sing, Boat - man do most a - ny old thing, Boat - man sing,
boat - man play, Boat - man dance your life a - way. Dance, boat - man dance,
Dance, boat - man dance. Dance, all night 'til the broad day-light, Go home with the girls in the
morn - ing. Hey - ho the boat - man row, Up and down the riv - er on the O - hi - o.
Hey - ho the boat - man row, Up and down the riv - er on the O - hi - o.

Boatman dance, boatman sing, Boatman do most any old thing.
Boatman sing, boatman play, Boatman dance your life away.

Dance boatman dance, Dance boatman dance.

Dance all night 'til the broad daylight,

Go home with the gals in the morning.

Hey-ho, the boatman row,

Up and down the river on the Ohio.

Hey-ho, the boatman row,

Up and down the river on the Ohio.

Now when that boatman blows his horn,

Look out farmer, your rooster's gone.

He stole my sheep and he stole my goat,

Put 'em in a bag and went to the boat.



Four and twenty boatman in a flock, Sitting by the seaside picking on a rock.

Picking on a rock, picking on a fiddle,

Picking at a catfish, bones in the middle.

Waterways, rivers, canals and streams, We gotta work to make them clean.

We work all day out on the bay, Then we dance the night away.