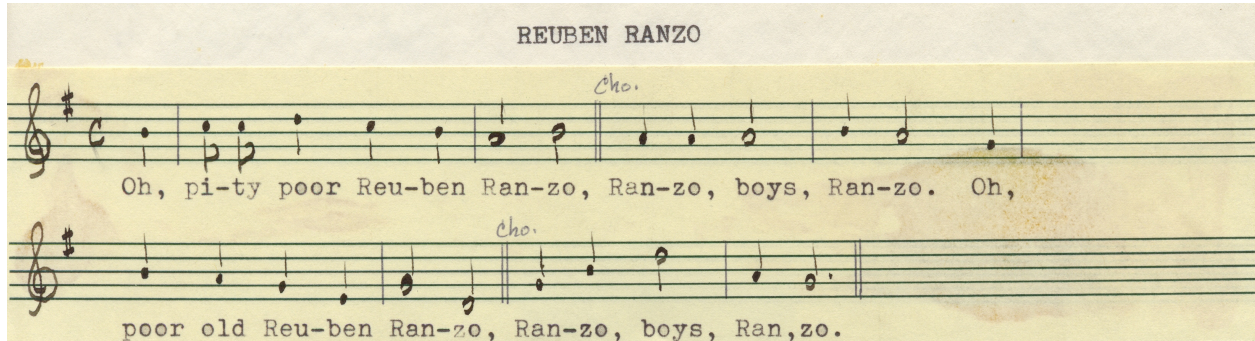


Reuben Ranzo

As sung by
Noble Brown
11-17-1946 Millville, WI



Verse 1.
Oh, pity poor Reuben Ranzo,
Oh, poor old Reuben Ranzo

Chorus
Ranzo, boys, Ranzo

Verse 2.
Oh, Ranzo was no sailor,
So he shipped aboard a whaler.

Verse 3.
Oh, Ranzo was no beauty,
He couldn't do his duty.

Verse 4.
So they took him to the gangway,
And gave him five and thirty.

Verse 5.
Now the captain was a good man,
He took him to the cabin.

Verse 6.
And he took him to his cabin,
And gave him wine and brandy.

Verse 7.
And he taught him navigation
To fit him for his station.

Verse 8.
And he married the captain's daughter,
And still he sails blue water.

Verse 9.
And now he's captain Ranzo,
Hurrah for Captain Ranzo.

Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.

Critical Commentary

Transcription by Peters, p. 104

HST notes:

In the Professional Papers series:
Sung by Noble B. Brown, age 61, Millville, 1946.

This is the longest account of Reuben Ranzo I have found in any printing. Mr. Brown told us that he learned it when he sailed "from San Francisco to Falmouth, England, aboard the Italian 3-masted full rigged ship Eliza, of Genoa. [the rest is crossed out:] Paid off at Ipswich, up river from Harwick, on the mouth of the Thames, England. From Portland, Ore., to Dublin, Ireland, aboard the 4-masted Barque Donna Fransisca of London, England. Paid off, Dublin."

Mr. Brown explained that the "rope's bite" is the middle of the coil and "to splice the main brace" is to issue a drink to the crew. Linscott states that Reuben Ranzo is a "halyard chantey that was popular about fifty years ago and is thought originally to have been one of the songs of the whaling fleet."

Editor's notes:

Linscott writes that "whether the name of the hero is a corruption of the Portuguese 'Lorenzo' is not definitely established, though it is generally know that the Yankee whalers carried a large number of 'Porygee' sailors on their long and dangerous bug profitable voyages."

Alternate titles/related songs: "Reuben Renzo."

Sources:

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Linscott, Eloise Hubbard, collector and editor. *Folk Songs of Old New England*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1939. "Reuben Renzo" Different words

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K.G.