

*The Hog-Eye Man* [1927]

Arranged by Edward Joseph Collins, composer

Introduction by Carl Sandburg, AMERICAN SONGBAG author,  
and Chicago acquaintance of Collins.

A "hog-eye" was sailor slang in the 1850's for a barge that cruised around Cape Horn to San Francisco, where a dirty, tumultuous little Babylon met all newcomers and offered them a "good time." Spenders with nuggets of gold and sacks of gold dust met gamblers and women from nowhere, not telling their real names. It was a lighted town that beckoned seamen from afar; it crept into a sea song, of how the hog-eye men were all the go when they came down to old San Francisco. I heard the cracked voice of an old time sailor sing it, in 1922, just after R. W. Gordon had him make a phonograph cylinder record. The singer put in a high falsetto chuckle once in a while as if the song meant there was joy to come or mischief ahead or happiness remembered.

1. O, the hog - eye men are all the go,  
When they come down to old San Fran - cis - co.  
And a hog - eye, railroad \*n-gger with his hog-eye,  
Row the boat ashore, and a hogeye,  
O, She wants the hogeye man.
2. O, the hog - eye man is the man for me,  
He works all day by the levee.  
And a hog - eye, railroad \*n-gger with his hog-eye,  
Row the boat ashore, and a hogeye,  
O, She wants the hogeye man.
3. Now who's been here since I been gone?  
A railroad \*n-gger with his sea-boots on.  
*Chorus*
4. Go bring me down my riding cane,  
For I'm going to see my darling Jane.  
*Chorus*
5. O, Sally in the garden picking peas,  
Her golden hair hanging down to her knees.  
*Chorus*

\* The N-word is almost always considered a racist epithet. Singers are strongly encouraged to substitute "brother."