# He Played His Ukulele As The Ship Went Down

Arthur Le Clerq 1932



**< Singing note: G >**

**INTRO: / 1 2 / 1 2**

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

Yo **[C]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[C]↓** ho!

I’ll **[G7]** tell you the tale of a **[C]** sailor

Who **[Em]** sailed the Bay of **[Em]** Biscay-o

As the **[B7]** captain of a **[Em]** whaler

Of his **[G7]** gallant deed you all should know

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

I’ll **[C]** tell the tale of the **[F]** Nancy Lee

The **[G7]** ship that got ship-**[C]**wrecked at **[G7]** sea

The **[C]** bravest man was **[F]** Captain Brown

For he **[G7]** played his ukulele as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

**[Am]** All the crew were **[F]** in des-**[E7]**pair

**[Am]** Some rushed here and the **[D7]** others rushed **[G7]** there

But the **[C]** Captain sat in the **[F]** Captain’s chair

And he **[G7]↓** played the ukulele as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

The **[C]** pets on board, were **[F]** all scared stiff

The **[G7]** cats meowed and the **[C]** monkeys **[G7]** sniffed

The **[C]** old green parrot hung **[F]** upside down

Saying **[G7]** “Scratch-a Polly Polly” as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

The **[Am]** crow’s nest fell and it **[F]** killed the **[E7]** crow

The **[Am]** starboard watch was **[D7]** two hours **[G7]** slow

But the **[C]** Captain sung fal-**[F]**doh-dee-oh-doh

And he **[G7]↓** played the ukulele when the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

The **[C]** skipper shouted **[F]** fore and aft

“I’ll **[G7]** have no slackers a-**[C]**board this **[G7]** craft

So **[C]** understand” said **[F]** Captain Brown

“I want **[G7]** everybody’s presence when the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down!

The **[Am]** cook’s gone mad and the **[F]** bosun’s **[E7]** lame

The **[Am]** rudder has gone and the **[D7]** deck’s a-**[G7]**flame

My **[C]** G string’s flat but **[F]** all the same

I shall **[G7]↓** play the ukulele when the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down”



They **[C]** struggled on a-**[F]**gainst the storm

The **[G7]** cold, cold wind was **[C]** far from **[G7]** warm

So **[C]** all the crew and **[F]** Captain Brown

Played **[G7]** ring-a-ring-a-roses then the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** fell **[C]↓** down

They **[Am]** shouted, “Women and **[F]** children **[E7]** first!”

The **[Am]** engine near came **[D7]** up their **[G7]** skirts

Then **[C]** all of a sudden his **[F]** boiler burst

So he **[G7]↓** played the ukulele and the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

"Have **[C]** faith in me!" the **[F]** captain cried

To **[G7]** this remark the **[C]** crew re-**[G7]**plied

**[C]** "You can trust us **[F]** Captain Brown

To **[G7]** finish off the rum before the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down"

The **[Am]** skipper shouted **[F]** back "No **[E7]** chat!

I'll **[Am]** do my best, then **[D7]** after **[G7]** that

D'you **[C]** mind if I pass **[F]** round the hat

As I **[G7]↓** play me ukulele as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down?"

The **[C]** mate said, "It's o-**[F]**kay with me

The **[G7]** shipwreck suits me **[C]** to a **[G7]** T

I **[C]** owe ten bob to **[F]** Captain Brown

And I'll **[G7]** never have to pay him if the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down"

The **[Am]** pessimistic **[F]** cook said **[E7]** he

Was **[Am]** sure the crew very **[D7]** soon would **[G7]** be

**[C]** Playing a harp, said **[F]** Brown, "Not me!

I shall **[G7]↓** play me ukulele as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down"

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

The **[C]** captain's wife was **[F]** on the ship

And **[G7]** he was glad she'd **[C]** made the **[G7]** trip

As **[C]** she could swim, she **[F]** might not drown

So he **[G7]** tied her to the anchor as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

They **[Am]** sprung a leak just **[F]** after **[E7]** dark

And **[Am]** through the hole came a **[D7]** hungry **[G7]** shark

It **[C]** bit the skipper near the **[F]** water mark

As he **[G7]↓** played his ukulele when the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

When they **[C]** reached the lifeboat **[F]** how they cursed

The **[G7]** second mate had **[C]** got there **[G7]** first

The **[C]** cook said, "I'll be **[F]** last to drown

'Cause I'm **[G7]** climbin' up the riggin' as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** goes **[C]↓** down"

**[Am]** Soon it was a **[F]** total **[E7]** wreck

The **[Am]** captain stood on the **[D7]** burning **[G7]** deck

The **[C]** flames leapt up all a-**[F]**round his neck

And **[G7]↓** burnt his ukulele as the **[C]↓** ship **[F]↓** went **[C]↓** down

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho!

And **[C]** that is the tale of the **[F]** Nancy Lee

The **[G7]** ship that got ship-**[C]**wrecked at **[G7]** sea

And **[C]** Captain Brown who was **[F]** in command

Now **[G7]↓** plays a ukulele in the **[C]↓** mer-**[F]↓**maid **[C]↓** band

**[G7]** Plays a ukulele in the **[C]↓** mer-**[F]↓**maid **[C]↓** band

Yo **[G7]↓** ho, me lads! Yo **[G7]↓** ho! Yo **[C]↓** ho!



[www.bytownukulele.ca](http://www.bytownukulele.ca)