



# “JOHN HENRY BLUES”

BY  
W. C. HANDY

Writer of  
“MEMPHIS BLUES”  
“ST. LOUIS BLUES”  
“HARLEM BLUES” Etc.

“JOHN HENRY BLUES” A true story from  
Negro Life the melody of which has been sung  
by laborers in the south since the Civil War.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

PUBLISHED BY

W. C. Handy

2573-8th Avenue

New York City

Paderewski

# John Henry Blues

W. C. HANDY

The piano introduction consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a 12-measure format. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody in the treble clef features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes.

Voice

The first vocal line is on a single staff in treble clef. It begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The lyrics are: "In Al - a - bam' at". The piano accompaniment continues below, with the bass clef staff showing a consistent rhythmic pattern of chords.

The second vocal line continues the melody. The lyrics are: "Mus-cles Shoals Dam I saw the great John Hen - - ry— A". The piano accompaniment features a more complex harmonic structure, including some chromatic movement in the bass line.

The third vocal line concludes the phrase. The lyrics are: "dusk - y hu - man bat-ter-ing ram— With mus-cles large and". The piano accompaniment maintains the bluesy feel with its characteristic chordal accompaniment.

sin-ew - y— He had a worlds rec-ord just for riv-et - ing steel of course this

rep - u - ta - tion thrilled him— He bet he'd drive more riv - ets than a

com-pressed air drill Al-though he won the ef - fort killed him— I've heard their

ham - mers ring and col-ored work-man sing From Tex - as to Vir - gin-ia.—



Dis ole ham - mer \_\_\_\_\_ killed - John Hen - - ry \_\_\_\_\_ Made mus - ic  
 dam in \_\_\_\_\_ all cre - a - - tion \_\_\_\_\_ Was be  
 Ford has \_\_\_\_\_ mil - lions and tril - - lions \_\_\_\_\_ Fo' Mus - cles

sweet \_\_\_\_\_ and it did a muse Dis lit - tle song made \_\_\_\_\_  
 gun \_\_\_\_\_ by our Un - cle Sam And now the lob - by - ist \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shoals \_\_\_\_\_ now aint that good news But Un - cle Sam wants \_\_\_\_\_

light - er his la - - bor \_\_\_\_\_ Dat's why we sing \_\_\_\_\_  
 of this great na - - tion \_\_\_\_\_ Says Mus - cle Shoals \_\_\_\_\_  
 oo - dles of bill - - ions \_\_\_\_\_ Just fo' de ham - - -

dem John Hen - ry blues \_\_\_\_\_ De big - gest  
 it aint worth a dam \_\_\_\_\_ Mis - tah  
 mer John Hen - ry used \_\_\_\_\_

## Morale

Let's to - geth - er (heh) all to - geth - er Hit'em hard

(heh) hit 'em high use yo' ham - mer

(heh) But not for knock - ing Here are some

good rea - sons why.

Emma Goldman knocked our Country  
 And to stop she did refuse  
 She's in Russia longing for Broadway  
 Trying to learn John Henry Blues.

Once a great man said to his people  
 They can't fight so we can't lose  
 He's in Holland chopping trees down  
 Trying to hum John Henry Blues.

Politicians knocked our liquor  
 So they took away our booze  
 Now the spenders and bar tenders  
 Harmonize John Henry Blues.

## MORALE

And when misfortune seems to trail us  
 And the things we prize we lose  
 Just keep hammering this will never fail us  
 If we sing John Henry Blues.