

John Henry

M: C; F: F or G, capo 5 or 7
CD 1-Track 91

Traditional

C

1. When John Hen-ry was a lit - tle ba - by, Just a' sit - ting on his pap - py's
2. John Hen-ry had a litt - le wo-man, And her name was Pol - ly

T
A
B

7 G C

knee, Well he picked up his ham-mer and a lit - tle piece of steel, Said "That ham-mer's gon-na
Anne, John Hen - ry took sick and he had to go to bed, Pol - ly Anne drove

14 G C

be the death of me, Lord, Lord, Ham-mer's gon - na be the death of me."
steel like a man, Lord, Lord, Polly Anne drove steel like a man.

C

3. Captain said to John Henry,

G

“Gonna bring me a steam drill ’round,

C

Gonna take that steam drill out on the job,

Gonna drive that steel on down, Lawd, Lawd,

G

C

Gonna drive that steel on down.”

4. John Henry told his captain,

Said, “A man ain’t nothin’ but a man,

And before I’d let that steam drill beat me down,

I’ll die with this hammer in my hand, Lawd, Lawd,

I’ll die with the hammer in my hand.”

5. Now the captain told John Henry,

“I believe this mountain’s caving in,”

John Henry said to his captain, “Oh my,

It’s my hammer just a’ sucking wind, Lawd, Lawd,

It’s my hammer just a’ sucking wind.”

6. John Henry told his captain,

“Looky yonder what I see,

Your drill’s done broke and your hole’s done choke,

And you can’t drive steel like me, Lawd, Lawd,

And you can’t drive steel like me.”

7. John Henry was hammering on the mountain,

And his hammer was striking fire,

He drove so hard ’til he broke his poor heart,

And he laid down his hammer and he died, Lawd, Lawd,

Laid down his hammer and he died.

8. They took John Henry to the graveyard,

And they buried him in the sand,

And every locomotive come roaring by,

Says, “Yonder lies a steel driving man, Lawd, Lawd,

Yonder lies a steel driving man.”