He Played His Ukulele As The Ship Went Down  
Arthur Le Clerq 1932

Singing note: G

INTRO:  / 1 2 / 1 2

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


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


The [C] pets on board, were [F] all scared stiff
The [C] old green parrot hung [F] upside 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


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


"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"
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
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"


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
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 [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 [C] flames leapt up all a-[F]round his neck
And [G7] burnt his ukulele as the [C] ship [F] went [C] down

And [C] that is the tale of the [F] Nancy Lee
And [C] Captain Brown who was [F] in command


Am          B7          C          D7          E7          Em          F          G7

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