

Sinking of the Reuben James

by Woody Guthrie
(1945)

^C
Have you heard of a ship called the good Reuben James
^C ^{G7(½)} ^{C(½)}
Manned by hard fighting men both of honor and fame?
^C ^{F(½)} ^{C(½)}
She flew the Stars and Stripes of the land of the free
^C ^{G7(½)} ^{C(½)}
But tonight she's in her grave at the bottom of the sea.

^C ^F
Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names
^{G7(½)} ^{G(½)} ^{F7(½)} ^{C(½)}
Did you have a friend on the good Reuben James?
^C ^{FD}
Tell me what were their names, tell me what were their names?
^{G7(½)} ^{G(½)} ^{F7(½)} ^{C(½)}
Did you have a friend on the good Reuben James?

One hundred men were drowned in that dark watery grave
When that good ship went down only forty-four were saved.
'Twas the last day of October we saved the forty-four
From the cold icy waters off that cold Iceland shore.

It was there in the dark of that uncertain night
That we watched for the U-boats and waited for a fight.
Then a whine and a rock and a great explosion roared
And they laid the Reuben James on that cold ocean floor.

Now tonight there are lights in our country so bright
In the farms and in the cities they're telling of the fight.
And now our mighty battleships will steam the bounding main
And remember the name of that good Reuben James.