

# Fire Down Below

Source:  
Joanna Colcord  
*Roll and Go*  
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Solo

There is fire in the low - er hold, there's fire down be - low.

Fire in the main - well, the cap - tain did - n't know.

Chorus

Fire! Fire! Fire down be - low. It's fetch a buck - et of

wat - er, girls, there's fire down be - low!

2. There is fire in the fore-top, fire in the main,  
Fire in the windlass and fire in the chain.  
(Chorus)
3. There is fire in the fore-peak, fire down below,  
Fire in the chain-plates, the bo-sun didn't know.  
(Chorus)
4. There is fire up aloft, there's fire down below,  
Fire in the galley, the cook he didn't know.  
(Chorus)

## Background Information

Another continuous operation requiring shanties was pumping ship. (In some ships it was more continuous than in others!) In earlier days, the pump handles, or brakes, worked up and down; but later wheel pumps were introduced, with the brakes attached to the rims. Pumping ship was likely to be a long monotonous spell of hard work, unless enlivened by a song. Almost any of the capstan shanties could be used on the pump-brakes, but a few were kept, by the force of convention, for no other use, as in the next example. Jack would have his joke, even about the most dreaded of dangers, fire at sea; and the joke lay in his choosing non-inflammable portions of the ship in which to locate his imaginary fire. There is always, of course, a fire in the galley, which is the ship's kitchen.