

Hoosen Johnny

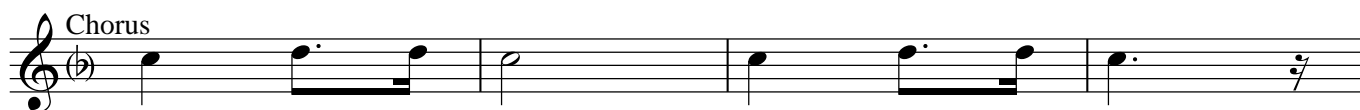
Source:
Carl Sandburg
The American Songbag
New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1927



1. The lit - tle black bull come down the mea - dow, Hoo - sen John - ny, Hoo-sen John - ny



The lit - tle black bull come down the mea - dow, Long time a - go.



Long time a - go, Long time a - go,



The lit - tle black bull come down the mea - dow, Long time a - go.

2. First he paw and then he bellow,
Hoosen Johnny, Hoosen Johnny,
First he paw and then he bellow,
Long time ago.

Chorus:
Long time ago,
Long time ago,
First he paw and then he bellow,
Long time ago.

3. He whet his horn on a white-oak sapling,
Hoosen Johnny, Hoosen Johnny,
He whet his horn on a white-oak sapling,
Long time ago.

Chorus:
Long time ago,
Long time ago,
He whet his horn on a white-oak sapling,
Long time ago.

4. He shake his tail, he jar the meadow, etc.

5. He paw the dirt in the heifers' faces, etc.

Background Information

Lawyers sat around the wood stoves of the taverns and hotels of the Eighth Circuit in Illinois and sang this on many a winter night. Lincoln heard it often. It was a favorite of his singing friend with the banjo, Ward Hill Lamon. Col. Clark E. Carr, who came to Illinois in 1852 and was a first settler of Galesburg, tells us in his book "The Illini" of these verses, "The improviser would go on singing as long as he could. The solo is a sort of droning chant; but the chorus, when sung by good voices, is superb. The song became a favorite with lawyers traveling the circuit in those days, and was often sung on convivial occasions. It is said that at one time, at Knoxville in our country, when some good news that caused universal rejoicing had been received, the court was adjourned, and judge, lawyers, jury, spectators, paraded around the public square singing, 'De ol' black bull kem down de medder.'