

Roll the Woodpile Down

According to Stan Hugill this is a sea version of an African-American song 'Haul the Woodpile Down' which originated in the southern states of America during the era of slavery and made its way via Mississippi rivermen to become a deep water song. It was sung as a capstan shanty on working ships as late as 1920. Roud 4443.

Echo text in [] sung by chorus group two.

Way down south where the cocks do crow
'Way down in Florida
The gals all dance to the old banjo
And we'll roll the woodpile down

Chorus

Rollin' [Rollin'], Rollin' [Rollin']
Rollin' the whole world 'round
That brown girl o' mine's down the Georgia Line
And we'll roll the woodpile down!

When I was a young man in me prime
I'd court them pretty gals two at a time.
{Original line - no longer acceptable: I'd take them yaller gals
two at a time}

Oh rouse and bust 'er is the cry
A sailor's wage is never high.

O Curly goes on the old ran-tan
O Curly's just a down-east man

We'll roll him high and we'll roll him low
We'll heave him up and away we'll go

O one more heave and that will do
We're the bullies to kick 'er through