

Roll the Woodpile Down

1. Way down south where the cocks do crow,
Way down in Florida.
 The gals they play on your old banjo.
And we'll roll the woodpile down.

**Rollin', Rollin',
 Rollin' the whole world round.
 That brown gal of mine's on the
 Georgia Line ...
 And we'll roll the woodpile down!**

2. O my Aunt Dinah she had a farm
Way down in Florida!
 O my Aunt Dinah she had a farm
And we'll roll the woodpile down.

3. When I was a young man in me prime,
Way down in Florida!
 I had them yaller girls two at a time,
And we'll roll the woodpile down.

[Now that I'm old and I'm turning grey
Way down in Florida!
 Them young gals all look the other way
And we'll roll the woodpile down]

4. Curly goes on the old ran-tan
Way down in Florida!
 'Cos Curly he's just a Down-East man.
And we'll roll the woodpile down.

5. We'll haul him high and we'll haul him low
Way down in Florida!
 We'll heave her up and away we'll go
And we'll roll the woodpile down.

6. Oh one more heave and that'll do,
Way down in Florida!
 For we're the bullies to kick 'er through.
And we'll roll the woodpile down.

**Rollin', Rollin',
 Rollin' the whole world 'round.
 That brown girl o' mine's on the
 Georgia Line ...
 And we'll roll the woodpile down.**

Ian Giles sings this at youtu.be/CmyoWtj_Aac

Other verses:

Rouse her and bust her is the cry
 A black man's wage is never high

I'm goin' down to Alabam'
 To roll them bales of cotton down.

Mobile Bay's no place for me,
 I'll pack my bags and go to sea.



Photo of Devon timber by [JanetElizabeth](#).

Notes:

Shanty sung at both **capstan** and **pumps**.

Stan Hugill, 1994, *Shanties from the Seven Seas*:

"This is partly related to Roll the Cotton Down. It was the sea version of a negro song **Haul the woodpile down** ... [which starts]

Old Aunt Dinah had a farm (Way down in Florida)
 Old Aunt Dinah had a farm (**Haul** the woodpile
 down!)

"I had my version from West Indian seamen, and it is fairly obvious that it originated in either the West Indies all the southern states of America, most probably the latter, being, perhaps, one of the many rivermen songs that reached deep water. Sailors sometimes sang the negro refrain "Haul the woodpile down". Taylor-Harris gives "Trav'ling, trav'ling" for "Rolling, rolling".

About the words

Georgia line - I can't find a shipping line; could it be the Georgia and Florida railroad line?

Down-East man - a sailor who sails on Down-Easters.

A Down Easter - a square-rigged merchant vessel combining large carrying capacity with a relatively sharp hull.

They got their name from having been built in Maine, which is downwind and east of all the major East Coast ports; down-easters were being used largely for the California grain trade 1865-1890.