

Fire Down Below

Fire in the gal - ley, fire in the house,

Fi - re in the beef kid, - scorch - ing the scouse. Fire, fire,

fire down be - low, - Fetch a buc - ket of water, - There's

Fire down be low.

1. Fire in the galley, fire in the house,
Fire in the beefkid, scorching the scouse.

Chorus

Fire, fire, fire down below,
Fetch a bucket of water,
Fire down below.

2. Fire in the cabin, fire in the hold,
Fire in the strong room melting the gold.

Chorus

3. Fire round the capstan, fire on the mast,
Fire on the main deck, burning it fast.

Chorus

4. Fire in the lifeboat, fire in the gig,
Fire in the pig-stye roasting the pig.

Chorus

5. Fire in the store room spoiling the food,
Fire on the orlop burning the wood.

Chorus

6. Fire on the waters, fire high above,
Fire in our hearts for the friends that we love.

Chorus

Vocabulary:

beefkid = small wooden tub in which beef salt is served
 scouse = mixture of salt beef and crushed biscuit
 orlop = the name of a lower deck

"Fire Down Below" is a pumping shanty. When wooden ships were replaced by iron ships, the shanty was used for the capstan. Hugill states it was one of the shanties sung aboard a British squarerigger. He was the shantyman who sang it on the four masted barque Garthpool a week or so before it wrecked on Ponta Reef, Cape Verde Islands in October 1929. Hugill gives three different tunes for the shanty. The song was printed in Davis' **Fifty Sailors' Songs or "Chanties"** (1870) and Hugill's **Shanties from the Seven Seas** (1987).