

# The Old Dun Cow

1. Some friends and I in a public house  
Were playing dominoes one night  
When into the room a fireman came,  
His face all chalky white  
"What's up?" says Brown, "Have you seen a  
ghost?"  
"Have you seen your Aunt Moriah?"  
"Oh my Aunt Moriah be bugged," says he,  
"The bleeding pubs on fire!"

## Chorus

Oh, there was Brown, upside down  
Lapping up the whiskey on the floor.  
"Booze, booze" the firemen cried  
As they come a-knockin' at the door.  
"Don't let 'em in till it's all drunk up  
And somebody shouted, "MacIntyre"  
[MacIntyre]  
And we all got blue blind paralytic drunk  
When the Old Dun Cow caught fire.

2. "Oh," says Brown, "What a bit of luck  
Everybody follow me!  
It's down to the cellar, if the fire's not there  
Then we'll have a grand old spree!"  
So we all went down with good old Brown  
And the booze we could not miss  
And we hadn't been there ten minutes or  
more  
Till we were quite like this  
**Chorus**
3. Then Smith ran over to the port wine tub  
And gave it just a few hard knocks.  
He started taking off his pantaloons  
Likewise his shoes and socks.  
"Oh no," says Brown, "That t'ain't allowed.  
You can't do that ting here!  
Don't be washing your trotters in the port  
wine tub  
When we got Guinness beer".  
**Chorus**
4. Then there came a mighty crash and  
Half the bloody room caved in!  
We were almost drowned by the fireman's hose  
And we hadn't finished the gin.  
So we got some tacks and some wet old sacks  
And we packed ourselves inside  
And we sat drinking the finest rum  
Till we were bleary-eyed.  
**Chorus**
5. Later that night, when the fire was out  
We came up from the cellar below.  
Our pub was burned. Our booze was drunk.  
Our heads was hanging low.  
"Oh look", says Brown with a look quite queer.  
Seems something raised his ire.  
"Now we gotta get down to Murphy's Pub,  
It closes on the hour!"  
**Chorus**

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"The Old Dun Cow", also known as "When the Old Dun Cow Caught Fire" is a music hall song written by Harry Wincott in 1893.



It is a song from the repertoire of the Copper Family. It can be found in Jim Copper's handwritten songbook from 1933 but it has not been included in the family's printed songbook.

It is included in the **Roud Folk Song Index** as #5323.

Bob Copper sang this song in a recording made by Peter Kennedy at Cecil Sharp House on the 1960 HMV album **A Jug of Punch: Broadside Ballads Old and New**. Louis Killen sang "The Blind Cow Caught Fire" in 1973 on his album **Sea Chanteys**. I learned it from the singing of John Roberts & Tony Barrand at one of the Philadelphia Folk Festivals.

The key of A minor may be too low for singing. If accompanying this on guitar, use a capo. I usually capo up three frets.