U3A Shanties Group **Fire Down Below (oh-oh-oh-oh boys)**

1. I thought I heard the old man say
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
2. You can go ashore and collect your pay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

2. But I don't care what the old man say
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
'cause £2.10 won't pay me way
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

3. I'll take some clothes and I'll run away
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
Because I can no longer stay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

4. I'll run away at the break of day
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
I'll run to me girl down 'Frisco Bay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

5. I know very well with me she'll stay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
Because she knows I have 12 months pay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

6. And we'll go down to the Midway Plaisance
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
Where the pretty girls do the hoochee coochee dance
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

7. I'll go ashore and I'll get me pay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
And I'll run away at the break of day
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

8. There's fire in the foretop and there's fire in the main
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
Fetch a bucket of water boys and put it out again.
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

9. I thought I heard the old man say
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.
You can go ashore and get your pay
Fire down below-oh-oh-oh-oh boys
Fire down below.

Join **Exmouth Shanty Men** in un-indented verses at youtu.be/cvIzwdVUiXc .

Notes

There are at least five different shanties with a refrain of Fire Down Below.

The Exmouth Shantymen say on their website

[This is an American version.] The song refers obliquely to the knocking shops of The Barbary Coast, which was a red-light district in old San Francisco, California. The neighbourhood quickly took on its seedy character during the California Gold Rush (1848–1858) and was known for gambling, prostitution and crime.

The name **Midway Plaisance** was later taken by an area of south-side Chicago, originally known (from the World's Columbian Exhibition in 1893) for its amusements and sideshows.

St Elmo's Fire on the masts on a ship at sea, from ***The Aerial World*** by Dr G Hartwig, London 1886. via commons.wikimedia.org.