

## Roll that Cotton

*This is a capstan and windlass shanty version of a work song originating in about 1860 from the American cotton fields. Great piece of research here: <http://shantiesfromthesevensesas.blogspot.co.uk/2012/02/93-101-roll-cotton-down-series.html>*

*screw = load, hoosier = resident of Indiana: on a Mississippi flatboat carrying corn from Indiana to New Orleans. Flatboats only went downstream: at their destination they were usually broken up and sold for lumber. The crew would have walked or ridden back home.*

*Our words are very different from other versions - elaborated by J. Hancox*

Oh was you ever in Mobile Bay?

*Roll the cotton down*

Where they screws the cotton all through the day

*Oh roll the cotton down*

### Chorus

*Roll that cotton <solo> bosun*

*Roll the cotton bosun*

*Roll that cotton*

*Oh roll the cotton down*

Now a dollar a day is a hoosier's pay

And screw for more is what they say

Now rock them blocks and make them cry

That ruddy topmast sheave is dry

Now I wish I had a drop of gin

I'd bowse that block right to the pin

And I wish I had a tot of rum

I'll sing you a song if you gives me some

Now if the landlord offers me one free

Instead of one pint I'll have three

Oh! I wish John Salt would keep his luff

The beggar thinks we've hauled enough