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SONGS OF THE CATTLE  
TRAIL AND COW CAMP

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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SONGS OF THE CATTLE

TRAIL AND COW CAMP

COLLECTED BY

JOHN A. LOMAX, B.A., M.A.

Executive Secretary Ex-Students' Association,  
the University of Texas.

For three years Sheldon Fellow from Harvard University

for the Collection of American Ballads; Ex-President

American Folk-Lore Society. Collector of

"Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier

Ballads"; joint author with Dr.

H. Y. Benedict of "The

Book of Texas."

WITH A FOREWORD BY

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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«

THAT THESE DEAR FRIENDS I LEAVE BEHIND

MAT KEEP KIND HEARTS\* REMEMBRANCE OF THE LOVE WE HAD."

Solon.

In affectionate gratitude to a group of men, my intimate friends  
during College days (brought under one roof by a "Fraternity"),  
whom I still love not less but more,

fFill Prather, Hammett Hardy, Penn Hargrove and Harry  
Sieger, of precious and joyous memory;

Norman Crozier, not yet quite emerged from Presbyterianism;

Eugene Barker, cynical, solid, unafraid;

" Cap' en \*\* Duval, a gentleman of Virginia, sah ;

Ed Miller, red-headed and royal-hearted ;

Bates MacFarland, calm and competent without camouflage;

Jimtnie Haven, who has put 'em over every good day since;

Charley Johnson, " the Swede " — the fattest, richest and dearest of  
the bunch;

Edgar Witt, whose loyal devotion and pertinacious energy built  
the "Frat" house;

Roy Bedichek, too big for any job he has yet tackled ;

" Curley " Duncan, who possesses all the virtues of the old time  
cattleman and none of the vices of the new;

Rom Rhome, the quiet and canny counter of coin;

Gavin Hunt, student and lover of all things beautiful;

Dick Kimball, the soldier; every inch of him a handsome man;

Alex and Bruce and Dave and George and "Freshman" Mathis  
and Clarence, the six Freshmen we " took in " ; while Ike  
MacFarland, Alfred Tierce Ward, and Guy and Charlie  
Witt were still in the process of assimilation, —



To this group of God's good fellows, I dedicate this little book.

No loopholes now are framing  
Lean faces, grim and brown,  
No more keen eyes are aiming  
To bring the redskin down ;  
But every wind careening  
Seems here to breathe a song —  
A song of brave careering,  
A saga of the strong.

#### FOREWORD

In collecting, arranging, editing, and preserving the " Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow Camp," my friend John Lomax has performed a real service to American literature and to America. No verse is closer to the soil than this; none more realistic in the best sense of that much-abused word; none more truly interprets and expresses a part of our national life. To understand and appreciate these lyrics one should hear Mr. Lomax talk about them and sing them; for they were made for the voice to pronounce and for the ears to hear, rather than for the lamplit silence of the library. They are as oral as the chants of Vachel Lindsay; and when one has the pleasure of listening to Mr. Lomax — who loves these verses and the men who first sang them — one reconstructs in imagination the

appropriate figures and romantic setting.

For nothing is so romantic as life itself. None of our illusions about life is so romantic as the truth. Hence the purest realism appeals to the mature imagination more powerfully than any impossible prettiness can do. The more we know of individual and universal life, the more we are excited and stimulated.

And the collection of these poems is an addition

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#### Foreword

to American Scholarship as well as to American Literature. It was a wise policy of the Faculty of Harvard University to grant Mr. Lomax a traveling fellowship, that he might have the necessary leisure to discover and to collect these verses; it is really \*\* original research," as interesting and surely as valuable as much that passes under that name; for it helps every one of us to understand our own country.

Wm. Lyon Phelps.

Yale University,

July 27, 1919.

vn\

## INTRODUCTION

"Look down, look down, that weary road,  
'Tis the road that the sun goes down."

« « «

"\*Twas way out West where the antelope roam,  
And the coyote howls 'round the cowboy's home.  
Where the mountains are covered with chaparral frail,  
And the valleys are checkered with the cattle trail,  
Where the miner digs for the golden veins.  
And the cowboy rides o'er the silent plains, — \*\*

The " Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow Camp " does not purport to be an anthology of Western verse. As its title indicates, the contents of the book are limited to attempts, more or less poetic, in translating scenes connected with the life of a cowboy. The volume is in reality a by-product of my earlier collection, \*\* Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads." In the former book I put together what seemed to me to be the best of the songs created and sung by the cowboys as they went about their work. In making the collection, the cowboys often sang or sent to me songs which I recognized as having already been in print ; although the singer usually said that some other cowboy had sung the song to him

and that he did not know where it had originated. For example, one night in New Mexico a cowboy sang to me, in typical cowboy music, Larry Chittcn-

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## Introduction

den's entire "Cowboys' Christmas Ball"; since that time the poem has often come to me in manuscript form as an original cowboy song. The changes — usually, it must be confessed, resulting in bettering the verse — which have occurred in oral transmission, are most interesting. Of one example, Charles Badger Clark's "High Chin Bob," I have printed, following Mr. Clark's poem, a cowboy version, which I submit to Mr. Clark and his admirers for their consideration.

In making selections for this volume from a large mass of material that came into my ballad hopper while hunting cowboy songs as a Traveling Fellow from Harvard University, I have included the best of the verse given me directly by the cowboys; other selections have come in through repeated recommendation of these men; others are vagrant verses from Western newspapers; and still others have been lifted from collections of Western verse written by such men as Charles Badger Clark, Jr., and Herbert H. Knibbs. To these two authors, as well as others who have permitted me to make use of their work,

the grateful thanks of the collector are extended.

As will be seen, almost one-half of the selections have no assignable authorship. I am equally grateful to these unknown authors.

All those who found " Cowboy Songs " diverting, it is believed, will make welcome " The Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow Camp." Many of these have this claim to be called songs: they have been set to

## Introduction

music by the cowboys, who, in their isolation and loneliness, have found solace in narrative or descriptive verse devoted to cattle scenes. Herein, again, through these quondam songs we may come to appreciate something of the spirit of the big West — its largeness, its freedom, its wholehearted hospitality, its genuine friendship. Here again, too, we may see the cowboy at work and at play; hear the jingle of his big bell spurs, the swish of his rope, the creaking of his saddle gear, the thud of thousands of hoofs on the long, long trail winding from Texas to Montana ; and know something of the life that attracted from the East some of its best young blood to a work that was necessary in the winning of the West. The trails are becoming dust covered or grass grown or lost underneath the farmers' furrow; but in the selections of this volume, many of them poems by courtesy, men of today and those who are to follow, may sense, at least in some small

measure, the service, the glamour, the romance of  
that knight-errant of the plains — the American  
cowboy.

J.A.L.

The University of Texas,  
Austin, July 9, 1919.

■ i

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## PART I

### COWBOY YARNS

The centipede runs across my head,  
The vinegaroon crawls in my bed,  
Tarantulas jump and scorpions play,  
The broncs are grazing far away,

The rattlesnake gives his warning cry,  
And the coyotes sing their lullaby,  
While I sleep soundly beneath the sky.

#### OUT WHERE THE WEST BEGINS

OUT where the handclasp's a little stronger,  
Out where the smile dwells a little longer,  
That's where the West begins;  
Out where the sun is a little brighter.  
Where the snows that fall are a trifle whiter.  
Where the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter,  
That's where the West begins.

Out where the skies are a trifle bluer,  
Out where friendship's a little truer.

That's where the West begins;  
Out where a fresher breeze is blowing.  
Where there's laughter in every streamlet flowing.  
Where there's more of reaping and less of sowing.

That's where the West begins.

Out where the world is in the making,  
Where fewer hearts in despair are aching.

That's where the West begins ;  
Where there's more of singing and less of sighing,  
Where there's more of giving and less of buying.  
And a man makes friends without half trying,

That's where the West begins.

Arthur Chapman.

#### THE SHALLOWS OF THE FORD

DID you ever wait for daylight when the stars  
along the river  
Floated thick and white as snowflakes in the water

deep and strange,  
Till a whisper through the aspens made the current

break and shiver  
As the frosty edge of morning seemed to melt and  
spread and change?

Once I waited, almost wishing that the dawn would

never find me ;  
Saw the sun roll up the ranges like the glory of the

Lord;  
Was about to wake my pardner who was sleeping

close behind me.  
When I saw the man we wanted spur his pony to

the ford.

Saw the ripples of the shallows and the muddy  
  
streaks that followed,  
As the pony stumbled toward me in the narrows of  
  
the bend;  
Saw the face I used to welcome, wild and watchful,  
  
lined and hollowed ;  
  
a

#### The Shallows of the Ford

And God knows I wished to warn him, for I once  
had called him friend.  
  
But an oath had come between us — I was paid by  
  
Law and Order;  
He was outlaw, rustler, killer — so the border  
  
whisper ran;  
Left his word in Caliente that he'd cross the Rio  
  
border —  
Call me coward? But I hailed him — "Riding  
  
close to daylight, Dan I "  
  
Just a hair and he'd have got me, but my voice, and

not the warning.

Caught his hand and held him steady; then he

nodded, spoke my name,

Reined his pony round and fanned it in the bright

and silent morning,

Back across the sunlit Rio up the trail on which he

came.

He had passed his word to cross it — I had passed

my word to get him —

We broke even and we knew it; 'twas a case of give

and take

For old times. I could have killed him from the

brush; instead, I let him

Ride his trail — I turned — my pardner flung his

arm and stretched awake;

The Shallows of the Ford

Saw me standing in the open; pulled his gun and

came beside me;

Asked a question with his shoulder as his left hand

pointed toward

Muddy streaks that thinned and vanished — not a

word, but hard he eyed me

As the water cleared and sparkled in the shallows of

the ford.

Henry Herbert Knibbs.

#### THE DANCE AT SILVER VALLEY

D

ON'T you hear the big spurs jingle f

Don't you feel the red blood tingle?

Be it smile or be it frown,

Be it dance or be it fight,

Broncho Bill has come to town

To dance a dance tonight.

Chaps, sombrero, handkerchief, silver spurs at heel ;

" Hello, Gil 1 " and " Hello, Pete 1 " " How do you

think you feel?" \



" Drinks are mine. Come fall in, boys ; crowd up

on the right. f

Here's happy days and honey joys. Fm going to

dance tonight."

(On his hip in leathern tube, a case of dark blue

steel. )

Bill, the broncho buster, from the ranch at Beaver

Bend,

Ninety steers and but one life in his hands to spend;

Ready for a fight or spree; ready for a race;

Going blind with bridle loose every inch of space.

Down at Johnny Schaeffer's place, see them trooping

in,

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The Dance at Silver Valley

Up above the women laugh; down below Is gin.

Belle McClure is dressed in blue, ribbon in her hair;

Broncho Bill is shaved and slick, all his throat is

bare.

Round and round with Belle McClure he whirls a

dizzy spin.

Jim Kershaw, the gambler, waits, — white his hands

and slim.

Bill whispers, 'A Belle, you know it well ; it is me or

him.

Jim Kershaw, so help me God, if you dance with

Belle

It is either you or me must travel down to hell."

Jim put his arm around her waist, her graceful

waist and slim.

Don't you hear the banjo laugh? Hear the fiddles  
scream ?

Broncho Bill leaned at the door, watched the twirl-  
ing stream.

Twenty fiends were at his heart snarling, " Kill him  
sure."

(Out of hell that woman came.) " I love you.

Belle McClure."

Broncho Bill, he laughed and chewed and careless  
he did seem.

The dance is done. Shots crack as one. The

crowd shoves for the door.

6

### The Dance at Silver Valley

Broncho Bill is lying there and blood upon the floor.

" You've finished me; youVe gambler's luck; you've

won the trick and Belle.

Mine the soul that here tonight is passing down to

hell.

And I must ride the trail alone. Goodbye to Belle

McClure."

Downstairs on the billiard cloth, something lying

white,

Upstairs still the dance goes on, all the lamps are

bright.

Round and round in merry spin — on the floor a

blot;

Laugh, and chaff and merry spin — such a little

spot.

Broncho Bill has come to town and danced his dance

tonight.

Don't you hear the fiddle shrieking?

Don't you hear the banjo speaking?

Don't you hear the big spurs jingle?

Don't you feel the red blood tingle?

Faces dyed with desert brown,

(One that's set and white) ;

Broncho Bill has come to town

And danced his dance tonight.

fWilliam Maxwell.

#### THE LEGEND OF BOASTFUL BILL

AT a round-up on the Gila

One sweet morning long ago,

Ten of us was throwed quite freely

By a hoss from Idaho.

An' we 'lowed he'd go a-beggin'

For a man to break his pride

Till, a-hitchin' up one leggin',

Boastful Bill cut loose an' cried :

" I'm a ornery proposition for to hurt,

I fulfil my earthly mission with a quirt,

I can ride the highest liver

'Twixt the Gulf an' Powder River,

An' I'll break this thing as easy as I'd

flirt"

So Bill climbed the Northern fury  
An' they mangled up the air  
Till a native of Missouri  
Would have owned the brag was fair.  
Though the plunges kept him reelin'  
An' the wind it flapped his shirt,  
Loud above the boss's squealin'  
We could hear our friend assert:

" I'm the one to take such rockin's as a  
joke;

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#### The Legend of Boastful Bill

Someone hand me up the makin's of a  
smoke.  
If you think my fame needs brightnin',  
Why, ril rope a streak o' lightnin'  
An' spur it up an' quirt it till it's broke."

Then one caper of repulsion

Broke that boss's back in two,

Cinches snapped in the convulsion,

Skyward man and saddle flew.

Up they mounted, never flaggin',

And we watched them through our tears,

While this last, thin bit o' braggin'

Came a-floatin' to our ears :

" If you ever watched my habits very

close.

You would know I broke such rabbits by

the gross.

I have kept my talent hidin',

I'm too good for earthly ridin'.

So I'm off to bust the lightnin' — Adios I "

Years have passed since that ascension;

Boastful Bill ain't never lit;

So we reckon he's a-wrenchin'

Some celestial outlaw's bit.

When the night wind flaps our slickers,

And the rain is cold and stout,

And the lightnin' flares and flickers,

We can sometimes hear him shout :

9

The Legend of Boastful Bill

"rm a ridin' son o' thunder o' the sky,  
I'm a broncho twistin' wonder on the fly.  
Hey, you carthlin's, shut your winders,  
We're a-rippin' clouds to flinders.  
If this blue-eyed darlin' kicks at you, you  
die."

Star-dust on his chaps and saddle,  
Scornful still of jar and jolt.  
He'll come back sometime a-straddle  
Of a bald-faced thunderbolt;  
And the thin-skinned generation  
Of that dim and distant day  
Sure will stare with admiration  
When they hear old Boastful say :

" I was first, as old raw-hiders all confest,  
I'm the last of all rough riders, and the

best.

Huh ! you soft and dainty floaters  
With your aeroplanes and motors.  
Huh! are you the greatgrandchildren of  
the West?"

From recitation^ original^ by  
Charles Badger Clark, Jr.

THE TEXAS COWBOY AND THE  
MEXICAN GREASER

I THINK we can all remember when a Greaser  
hadn't no show  
In Palo Pinto particular, — it ain't very long ago ;  
A powerful feelin' of hatred ag'in the whole Greaser

race

That murdered bold Crockett and Bowie pervaded

all in the place.

Why, the boys would draw on a Greaser as quick

as they would on a steer ;

They was shot down without warnin' often, in the

memory of many here.

One day the bark of pistols was heard ringin' out

in the air,

And a Greaser, chased by some ranchmen, tore

round here into the square.

I don't know what he's committed, — 'tain't likely

^ anyone knew, —

But I wouldn't bet a check on the issue ; if you knew

the gang, neither would you.

Breathless and bleeding, the Greaser fell down by



the side of the wall ;

And a man sprang out before him, — a man both

strong and tall, —

By his clothes I should say a cowboy, — a stranger

in town, I think, —

II

The Texas Cowboy and the Mexican Greaser

With his pistol he waved back the gang, who was

wild with rage and drink.

" I warn ye, get back I " he said, " or I'll blow your

heads in two !

A dozen on one poor creature, and him wounded

and bleeding, too 1 "

The gang stood back for a minute; then up spoke

Poker Bill :

\*\* Young man, ycr a stranger, I reckon. We don't

wish yer any ill ;

But come out of the range of the Greaser, or, as

sure as I live, you'll croak; "

And he drew a bead on the stranger. I'll tell yer

it wa'n't no joke.

But the stranger moven' no muscle as he looked in

the bore of Bill's gun;

He hadn't no thought to stir, sir; he hadn't no

thought to run;

But he spoke out cool and quiet, " I might live for

a thousand year

And not die at last so nobly as defendin' this

Greaser here;

For he's wounded, now, and helpless, and hasn't

had no fair show;

And the first of ye boys that strikes him, I'll lay

that first one low."

The gang respected the stranger that for another

was willing to die;

They respected the look of daring they saw in that

cold, blue eye.

12

The Texas Cowboy and the Mexican Greaser

They saw before them a hero that was glad in the  
  
right to fall;  
And he was a Texas cowboy, — never heard of Rome  
  
at all.  
Don't tell me of yer Romans, or yer bridge bein'  
  
held by three;  
True manhood's the same in Texas as it was in  
  
Rome, d'ye see?  
Did the Greaser escape? Why certain. I saw the  
  
hull crowd over thar  
At the ranch of Bill Simmons, the gopher, with their  
  
glasses over the bar.  
  
From recitation. Anonymous.

13

BRONCHO VERStJS BICYCLE

THE first that we saw of the high-tone tramp

War over thar at our Pecos camp ;  
He war comin' down the Santa Fe trail  
Astride of a wheel with a crooked tail,  
A-skinnin' along with a merry song  
An' a-ringin' a little warnin' gong.\*  
He looked so outlandish, s^ange aifU queer  
That all of us grinned from ear to ear,  
And every boy on the round-up swore  
He never seed sich a hoss before.

Wal, up he rode with a sunshine smile

An' a-smokin' a cigarette, an' I'll

Be kicked in the neck if I ever seen

Sich a saddle as that on his queer machine.

Why, it made us laugh, fer it wasn't half

Big enough fer the back of a suckin' calf.

He tuk our fun in a keerless way,

A-venturin' only once to say

Thar wasn't a broncho about the place

Could down that wheel in a ten-mile race.

I'd a lightnin' broncho out in the herd  
That could split the air like a flyin' bird,

## Broncho Versus Bicycle

An' I hinted round in an off-hand way,  
That, providin' the enterprize would pay,  
I thought as I might jes' happen to light  
On a hoss that would leave him out er sight.  
In less'n a second we seen him yank  
A roll o' greenbacks out o' his flank,  
An' he said if we wanted to bet, to name  
The limit, an' he would tackle the game.

Jes' a week before we had all been down

On a jamboree to the nearest town.

An' the whiskey joints and the faro games

An' a^shakin' our hoofs with the dance hall dames,

Made a wholesale bust; an', pard, I'll be cussed

If a man in the outfit had any dust.

An' so I explained, but the youth replied

That he'd lay the money matter aside.

An' to show that his back didn't grow no moss

He'd bet his machine against my hoss.

I tuk him up, an' the bet war closed.  
An' me a-chucklin', fer I supposed  
I war playin' in dead-sure, winnin' luck  
In the softest snap I had ever struck.  
An' the boys chipped in with a knowin' grin,  
Fer they thought the fool had no chance to win.  
An' so we agreed fer to run that day  
To the Navajo cross, ten miles away, —  
As handsome a track as you ever seed  
Fer testin' a bosses prettiest speed.

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#### Broncho Versus Bicycle

#### Apache Johnson and Texas Ned

Saddled up their hosses an' rode ahead

To station themselves ten miles away

An' act as judges an' see fair play;

While Mexican Bart and big Jim Hart

Stayed back fer to give us an even start.

I got aboard of my broncho bird

An' we came to the scratch an' got the word;

An' I laughed till my mouth spread from ear to ear

To see that tenderfoot drop to the rear.

The first three miles slipped away first-rate;

Then bronc began fer to lose his gait.

But I warn't oneasy an' didn't mind

With tenderfoot more'n a mile behind.

So I jogged along with a cowboy song

Till all of a sudden I heard that gong

A-ringin' a warnin' in my ear —

Ting, ting, ting, ting, — too infernal near ;

An' lookin' backwards I seen that chump

Of a tenderfoot gainin' every jump.

I hit old bronc a cut with the quirt

An' once more got him to scratchin' dirt;

But his wind got weak, an' I tell you, boss,

I seen he wasn't no ten-mile boss.

Still, the plucky brute took another shoot

An' pulled away from the wheel galoot.

But the animal couldn't hold his gait;

An' the idea somehow entered my pate

i6

#### Broncho Versus Bicycle

That if tenderfoot's legs didn't lose their grip

He'd own that hoss at the end of the trip.

Closer an' closer come tenderfoot,

An' harder the whip to the hoss I put;

But the Eastern cuss, with a smile on his face

Ran up to my side with his easy pace —

Rode up to my side, an' dern his hide,

Remarked 'twere a pleasant day fer a ride;

Then axed, unconcerned, if I had a match,

An' on his britches give it a scratch.

Lit a cigarette, said he wished me good-day.

An' as fresh as a daisy scooted away.

Ahead he went, that infernal gong

A-ringin' " good-day " as he flew along.

An' the smoke from his cigarette came back

Like a vaporous snicker along his track.

On an' on he sped, gettin' further ahead.

His feet keepin' up that onceseaseable tread.

Till he faded away in the distance, an' when



I seed the condemned Eastern rooster again

He war thar with the boys at the end of the race.

That same keerless, onconsarned smile on his face.

Now, pard, when a cowboy gits licked he don't swar

Nor kick, if the beatin' are done on the squar;

So I tuck that Easterner right by the hand

An' told him that broncho awaited his brand.

Then I axed him his name, an' where from he came,

17

#### Broncho Versus Bicycle

An' how long he'd practiced that wheel-roUin' game.

Tom Stevens he said war his name, an' he come

From a town they call Bosting, in old Yankeedom.

Then he jist paralyzed us by sayin' he'd whirled

That very identical wheel round the world.

Wal, pard, that's the story of how that smart chap

Done me up w'en I thought I had sich a soft snap,

Done me up on a race with remarkable ease,

An' lowered my pride a good many degrees.

Did I give him the boss ? W'y o' course I did, boss,

An' I tell you it warn't no diminutive loss.

He writ me a letter from back in the East,

An' said he presented the neat little beast

To a feller named Pope, who stands at the head  
O' the ranch where the cussed wheel bosses are bred.

Anonymous.

i8

#### RIDERS OF THE STARS

TWENTY abreast down the Golden Street ten  
thousand riders marched;  
Bow-legged boys in their swinging chaps, all clumsily

keeping time;  
And the Angel Host to the lone, last ghost their

delicate eyebrows arched  
As the swaggering sons of the open range drew  
up to the throne sublime.

Gaunt and grizzled, a Texas man from out of the

concourse strode,  
And doffed his hat with a rude, rough grace, then

lifted his eagle head;  
The sunlit air on his silvered hair and the bronze

of his visage glowed;

" Marster, the boys have a talk to make on the

things up here," he said.

A hush ran over the waiting throng as the Cherubim

replied :

" He that readeth the hearts of men He deemeth

your challenge strange.

Though He long hath known that ye crave your

own, that ye would not walk but ride.

Oh, restless sons of the ancient earth, ye men of the

open range I "

19

Riders of the Stars

Then warily spake the Texas man : \*\* A petition

and no complaint

We here present, if the Law allows and the Marster

He thinks it fit ;

We-all agree to the things that be, but we're long-  
ing for things that ain't,

So we took a vote and we made a plan and here is

the plan we writ : —

« (

Give us a range and our horses and ropes, open

the Pearly Gate,

And turn us loose in the unfenced blue riding the

sunset rounds.

Hunting each stray in the Milky Way and running

the Rancho straight;

Not crowding the dogie stars too much on their way

to the bedding-grounds.

t< (

Maverick comets that's running wild, we'll rope

'em and brand 'em fair.

So they'll quit stampeding the starry herd and scar-

ing the folks below,

And we'll save 'em prime for the round-up time,  
and we riders'll all be there.

Ready and willing to do our work as we did in the  
long ago.

a 4

We've studied the Ancient Landmarks, Sir;  
Taurus, the Bear, and Mars,

20

Riders of the Stars

And Venus a-smiling across the west as bright as a

burning coal,

Plain to guide as we punchers ride night-herding

the little stars,

With Saturn's rings for our home corral and the

Dipper our water hole.

" ' Here, we have nothing to do but yarn of the

days that have long gone by.

And our singing it doesn't fit in up here though we

tried it for old time's sake;

Our hands are itching to swing a rope and our legs

are stiff; that's why

We ask you, Marster, to turn us loose — just give

us an even break! ' "

Then the Lord He spake to the Cherubim, and this

was His kindly word :

" He that keepeth the threefold keys shall open and

let them go;

Turn these men to their work again to ride with the

starry herd;

My glory sings in the toil they crave; 'tis their

right I would have it so."

Have you heard in the starlit dusk of eve when the

lone coyotes roam,

The Yip! Yip! Yip! of a hunting cry and the

echo that shrilled afar,

## Riders of the Stars

As you listened still on a desert hill and gazed at  
  
the twinkling dome,  
And a viewless rider swept the sky on the trail of  
  
a shooting star?

Henry Herbert Knibbs.

22

## LASCA

I WANT free life, and I want fresh air;  
And I sigh for the canter after the cattle,  
The crack of the whips like shots in battle,  
The medley of hoofs and horns and heads  
That wars and wrangles and scatters and spreads;  
The green beneath and the blue above.  
And dash and danger, and life and love —  
And Lasca!

Lasca used to ride  
On a mouse-grey mustang close to my side,  
With blue serape and bright-belled spur;

I laughed with joy as I looked at her!  
Little knew she of books or creeds ;  
An Ave Maria sufficed her needs;  
Little she cared save to be at my side.  
To ride with me, and ever to ride.  
From San Saba's shore to Lavaca's tide.  
She was as bold as the billows that beat.  
She was as wild as the breezes that blow:  
From her little head to her little feet.  
She was swayed in her suppleness to and fro  
By each gust of passion ; a sapling pine  
That grows on the edge of a Kansas bluff  
And wars with the wind when the weather is rough.  
Is like this Lasca, this love of mine.

23

Lasca

She would hunger that I might eat,  
Would take the bitter and leave me the sweet ;  
But once, when I made her jealous for fun  
At something I whispered or looked or done,  
One Sunday, in San Antonio,  
To a glorious girl in the Alamo,  
She drew from her garter a little dagger.  
And — sting of a wasp — it made me stagger !  
An inch to the left, or an inch to the right,  
And I shouldn't be maundering here tonight;  
But she sobbed, and sobbing, so quickly bound  
Her torn rebosa about the wound



That I swiftly forgave her. Scratches don't count  
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

Her eye was brown — a deep, deep brown;  
Her hair was darker than her eye ;  
And something in her smile and frown,  
Curled crimson lip and instep high.  
Showed that there ran in each blue vein,  
Mixed with the milder Aztec strain.  
The vigorous vintage of Old Spain.  
She was alive in every limb  
With feeling, to the finger tips;  
And when the sun is like a fire.  
And sky one shining, soft sapphire  
One does not drink in little sips.

The air was heavy, the night was hot,  
I sat by her side and forgot, forgot;

24

Lasca

Forgot the herd that were taking their rest,

Forgot that the air was close oppressed,

That the Texas norther comes sudden and soon.

In the dead of the night or the blaze of the noon;

That, once let the herd at its breath take fright.

Nothing on earth can stop their flight;

And woe to the rider, and woe to the steed.

That falls in front of their mad stampede 1

• • • • •

Was that thunder? I grasped the cord

Of my swift mustang without a word.

I sprang to the saddle, and she clung behind.

Away 1 on a hot chase down the wind I

But never was fox-hunt half so hard.

And never was steed so little spared.

For we rode for our lives. You shall hear how we  
fared

In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

The mustang flew, and we urged him on;

There was one chance left, and you have but one

Halt, jump to the ground, and shoot your horse ;

Crouch under his carcass, and take your chance;

And if the steers in their frantic course

Don't batter you both to pieces at once,

You may thank your star; if not, goodbye

To the quickening kiss and the long-drawn sigh.

And the open air and the open sky,

In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

Lasca

The cattle gained on us, and, just as I felt  
For my old six-shooter behind in my belt,  
Down came the mustang, and down came we.  
Clinging together — and, what was the rest?  
A body that spread itself on my breast.  
Two arms that shielded my dizzy head.  
Two lips that hard to my lips were prest;  
Then came thunder in my ears,  
As over us surged the sea of steers,  
Blows that beat blo6d into my eyes,  
And when I could rise -. —

Lasca was dead!

• • • • •

I gouged out a grave a few feet deep.

And there in the Earth's arms I laid her to sleep;

And there she is lying, and no one knows ;

And the summer shines, and the winter snows ;

For many a day the flowers have spread

A pall of petals over her head;

And the little grey hawk hangs aloft in the air.

And the sly coyote trots here and there.

And the black snake glides and glitters and slides

Into the rift of a cottonwood tree;

And the buzzard sails on.

And comes and is gone.

Stately and still, like a ship at sea.

And I wonder why I do not care

For the things that are, like the things that were.

Does half my heart lie buried there

In Texas, down by the Rio Grande?

Frank Desprez.

## GIRL

SHE was a Texas maiden, she came of low degree,  
Her clothes were worn and faded, her feet from  
shoes were free ;  
Her face was tanned and freckled, her hair was

sun-burned, too.

Her whole darned tout ensemble was painful for to

view!

She drove a lop-eared mule team attached unto a

plow,

The trickling perspiration exuding from her brow;

And often she lamented her cruel, cruel fate.

As but a po' white's daughter down in the Lone Star  
State.

No courtiers came to woo her, she never had a

beau.

Her misfit face precluded such things as that, you

know, —

She was nobody's darling, no feller's solid girl.

And poets never called her an uncut Texas pearl.

Her only two companions was those two flea-bit

mules,

And these she but regarded as animated tools

To plod along the furrows in patience up and down

And pull the ancient wagon when pap'd go to town.

27

### The Transformation of a Texas Girl

No fires of wild ambition were flaming in her soul,  
Her eyes with tender passion she'd never upward

roll ;

The wondrous world she'd heard of, to her was but

a dream

As walked she in the furrows behind that lop-eared

team.

Born on that small plantation, 'twas there she

thought she'd die;

She never longed for pinions that she might rise and

fly

To other lands far distant, where breezes fresh and

cool

Would never shake and tremble from brayings of a

mule.

• • • • •

But yesterday we saw her dressed up in gorgeous

style!

A half a dozen fellows were basking in her smile 1

She'd jewels on her fingers, and jewels in her ears —

Great sparkling, flashing brilliants that hung as

frozen tears !

The feet once nude and soil-stained were clad in

Frenchy boots,

The once tanned face bore tintings of miscellaneous

fruits ;

The voice that once admonished the mules to move

along

Was tuned to new-born njusic, as sweet as Siren's

song I

28

The Transformation of a Texas Girl

Her tall and lanky father, one knows as \*\* Sleepy

Jim,"

Is now addressed as Colonel by men who honor him ;

And youths in finest raiment now take him by the

paw.

Each in the hope that some day he'll call him dad-

in-law.

Their days of toil are over, their sun has risen at

last,

A gold-embroidered curtain now hides their rocky

past;

For was it not discovered their little patch of soil

Had rested there for ages above a flow of oil?

James Barton Adams.

29

#### THE GLORY TRAIL

>TT 7AY high up the Mogollons,^

VV Among the mountain tops,

A lion cleaned a yearlin's bones

And licked his thankful chops,

When on the picture who should ride,

A-trippin' down the slope.

But High-Chin Bob, with sinful pride

And ma v' rick-hungry rope.



" Oh, glory be to m^/" says he,  
^' And fatness unfadin' flowers/  
All meddlin' hands are far away;  
I ride my good top-hawse today  
And Pm top-rope of the Lazy J — ■  
Hi! kitty cat, youWe ours! "

That lion licked his paw so brown  
And dreamed soft dreams of veal —  
And then the circlin' loop sung down  
And roped him 'round his meal.  
He yowled quick fury to the world  
Till all the hills yelled back;  
The top-hawse gave a snort and whirled  
And Bob caught up the slack.

^Pronounced by the natives " muggy-yones."

30

The Glory Trail

it

Oh, glory be to me,^' laughs he.

We hit the glory trail.

No human man as I have read  
Darst loop a ragin' lion's head,  
Nor ever hawse could drag one dead  
Until we told the tale."

'Way high up the MogoUons

That top-hawse done his best,

Through whippin' brush and rattlin' stones.

From canyon-floor to crest.

But ever when Bob turned and hoped

A limp remains to find,

A red-eyed lion, belly roped

But healthy, loped behind.

€<

Oh, glory be to me," grunts he.

This glory trail is rough,  
Yet even till the Judgment Morn  
I'll keep this dally 'round the horn.

For never any hero born  
Could stoop to holler: ' nuff ' "

Three suns had rode their circle home  
Beyond the desert's rim.  
And turned their star herds loose to roam  
The ranges high and dim;  
Yet up and down and round and 'cross  
Bob pounded, weak and wan,  
For pride still glued him to his hawse  
And glory drove him on.

31

The Glory Trail

it

Oh, glory be to me,^ sighs he.  
" He kaint be drug to death,  
But now I know beyond a doubt  
Them heroes I have read about  
Was only fools that stuck it out  
To end of mortal breath.^'

\*Way high up the Mogollons

A prospect man did swear

That moon dreams melted down his bones

And hoisted up his hair:

A ribby cow-hawse thundered by,

A lion trailed along,

A rider, ga'nt, but chin on high,

Yelled out a crazy song.

^' Oh, glory be to me/ " cries he,

^' And to my noble noosel

stranger, tell my pards below

I took a rampin' dream in tow,

And if I never lay him low,

ril never turn him loose/ "

Charles Badger Clark,

\*T¥ 7AY high up in the Mokiones, among the

VV mountain tops,

A lion cleaned a yearling's bones and licks his thankful chops ;

And who upon the scene should ride, a-trippin' down

the slope,

But High Chin Bob of sinful pride and maverick-hungry rope.

" Oh, glory be to me I " says he, " an' fame's

unfadin' flowers;

I ride my good top boss today and I'm top hand

of Lazy-J,

So, kitty-cat, you're ours I "

The lion licked his paws so brown, and dreamed soft

dreams of veal.

As High Chin's rope came circlin' down and roped

him round his meal ;

She yowled quick fury to the world and all the hills

yelled back;

That top horse gave a snort and whirled and Bob

took up the slack.

" Oh, glory be to me I " says he, \*\* we'll hit the

glory trail.

Hiffh Chin Bob

No man has looped a lion's head and lived to

drag the critter dead

Till I shall tell the tale."

'Way high up in the Mokiones that top hoss done his

best,

'Mid whippin' brush and rattlin\*^ stones from canon-  
floor to crest;

Up and down and round and cross Bob pounded

weak and wan,

But pride still glued him to his hoss and glory  
spurred him on.

'\* Oh, glory be to me I " says he, " this glory

trail is rough I

But I'll keep this dally round the horn until

the toot of judgment mom

Before I'll holler 'nough ! "

Three suns had rode their circle home, beyond

the desert rim.

And turned their star herds loose to roam the ranges

high and dim;

And whenever Bob turned and hoped the limp remains to find,

A red-eyed lion, belly roped, but healthy, loped behind 1

" Oh, glory be to me," says Bob, " he caint

be drug to death !

These heroes that I've read about were only

fools that stuck it out

To the end of mortal breath."

34

High Chin Bob

\*Way high up in the Moklones, if you ever camp

there at night,

You'll hear a rukus among the stones that'll lift

your hair with fright;

You'll see a cow-hoss thunder by — a lion trail

along,

And the rider bold, with his chin on high, sings forth

his glory song:

" Oh, glory be to me I " says he, " and to my

mighty noose.

Oh, pardner, tell my friends below I took a

ragin' dream in tow,

And if I didn't lay him low, I never turned him

loose 1 "

From oral rendition.

35

TO HEAR HIM TELL IT

I WAS just about to take a drink —

I was mighty dry —

So I hailed an old time cowman

Who was passing by,

" Come in, Ole Timer I have a drink I

Kinda warm today I"

As we leaned across the bar-rail —

'\* How's things up your way? "

\*\* Stock is doin' fairly good,

Range is gettin' fine;

I jes dropped down to meetin' here



To spend a little time.

Con'sidable stuff a-movin' now —

Cows an' bosses, too.

Prices high an' a big demand —

Now I'm tellin' you!

\*\* I've loaded out my feeders.

Got a good price all aroun' ;

Sold 'em in Kansas City

To a commission man named Brown.

A thousand told o' mixed stuff.

In pretty fair shape, too,"

Said the old Texas cowman,

" Now I'm tellin' you !

36

To Hear Him Tell It

" I've been in this yere country

Since late in fifty-nine,

I know every foot o' sage brush

Clear to the southern line.

Got my first bunch started up

Long in seventy-two,

Had to ride range with a long rope —

Now I'm tellin' you 1

" Lordy, I kin remember

Them good ole early days

When we ust t' trail the herds north

'N forty different ways.

Jes'n point 'em from the beddin' groun'

An' let 'em drift right through,"

Said the reminiscent cowman,

" Now I'm tellin' you 1

\*\* Yessir, trailed 'em up to Wichita,

Cross the Kansas line,

Made deliveries at Benton

As early as fifty-nine.

Turned 'em most to soldiers.

Some went to Injuns, too,

Beef wasn't nigh so high then —

Now I'm tellin' you 1

" Son, I've fit nigh every Injun

That ever roamed the plains,

'N I was one o' the best hands

37

To Hear Him Tell It

That ever pulled bridle reins.

Why, you boys don't know range life —

You don't seem to git the ways,

Like we did down in Texas

In them good ol' early days 1

" Yes, thing's a heap sight diff'rent now 1

'Tain't like in them ol' days

When cowmen trailed their herds north

'N forty diff'rent ways.

We ship 'em on the railroad now,

Load out on the big S. P.,"

Says the relic of Texas cowman

As he takes a drink with me.

" I figger on buyin' more feeders,

From down across the line —

Chihuahua an' Sonora stuff.

An' hold 'em till they're prime.

So here's to the steers an' yearlin's 1 "

As we clink our glasses two,

" Things ain't the same as they used to be.

Now I'm tellin' you!

\*\* I got t' git out an' hustle,  
I ain't got time t' stay;  
Jes' want t' see some uh the boys  
'N then I'm on my way.  
There's many a hand here right now  
That I know'd long, long ago,

38

To Hear Him Tell It

When ranch land was free an' open  
An' the plowman had a show.

\*' 'Tain't often we git together

To swap yarns an' tell our lies,"

Said the old time Texas cowman

As a mist comes to his eyes.

" So let's drink up; here's howl "

As we drain our glasses two,

" Them was good ol' days an' good ol' ways —

Now I'm tellin' you 1 "

He talked and talked and yarned away,

He harped on days of yore —

My head it ached and I grew faint;

My legs got tired and sore.

Then a woman yelled, "You come here, John!"

And Lord! how he flew!

And the last I heard as he broke and ran

Was, " Now I'm tellin' you 1 "

I won't never hail old timers

To have a drink with me,

To learn the history of the range

As far back as seventy-three.

And the next time that I'm thirsty

And feeling kind of blue,

I'll step right up and drink alone —

Now I'm tellin' you!

From the Wild Bunch.

## THE CLOWN'S BABY

IT was on the western frontier, —  
The miners, rugged and brown,  
Were gathered round the posters,  
The circus had come to town!  
The great tent shone in the darkness  
Like a wonderful palace of light.  
And rough men crowded the entrance,-  
Shows didn't come every night 1

Not a woman's face among them;

Many a face that was bad,

And some that were only vacant,

And some that were very sad.

And behind a canvas curtain.

In a corner of the place.

The clown, with chalk and vermilion,

Was "making up" his face.

A weary looking woman

With a smile that still was sweet,

Sewed on a little garment.

With a cradle at her feet.  
Pantaloone stood ready and waiting.  
It was time for the going on ;  
But the clown in vain searched wildly,-  
The " property baby " was gone!

40

#### The Clown's Baby

He murmured, impatiently hunting,

'\* It's strange that I cannot find —

There, I've looked in every corner;

It must have been left behind 1 "

The miners were stamping and shouting.

They were not patient men;

The clown bent over the cradle, —

" I must take you, little Ben."

«

The mother started and shivered,

But trouble and want were near;



She lifted the baby gently,

" You'll be very careful, dear? "

"Careful? You foolish darling 1"

How tenderly it was said!

What a smile shone through the chalk and paint!

" I love each hair of his head 1 "

The noise rose into an uproar.

Misrule for the time was king;

The clown with a foolish chuckle

Bolted into the ring.

But as, with a squeak and flourish.

The fiddles closed their tune

"You'll hold him as if he were made of glass?"

Said the clown to the pantaloons.

The jovial fellow nodded,

" I've a couple myself," he said.

" I know how to handle 'em, bless you!

### The Clown's Baby

Old fellow, go ahead 1 "

The fun grew fast and furious,

And not one of all the crowd

Had guessed that the baby was alive,

When he suddenly laughed aloud.

Oh, that baby laugh 1 It was echoed

From the benches with a ring,

And the roughest customer there sprang up

With, " Boys, It's the real thing."

The ring was jammed in a minute.

Not a man that did not strive

For a " shot at holding the baby," —

The baby that was alive 1

He was thronged with kneeling suitors

In the midst of the dusty ring.

And he held his court right royally, —

The fair little baby king, —

Till one of the shouting courtiers, —

A man with a bold, hard face.

The talk, for miles, of the country.

And the terror of the place.

Raised the little king to his shoulder

And chuckled, " Look at that I "

As the chubby fingers clutched his hair;

Then, " Boys, hand round the hat! "

There never was such a hatful

Of silver and gold and notes ;

42

The dowries Baby

People are not always penniless

Because they don't wear coats.

And then, "Three cheers for the baby I"

I tell you those cheers were meant,

And the way that they were given  
Was enough to raise the tent.  
And then there was sudden silence  
And a gruff old miner said,  
\*\* Come boys, enough of this rumpus;  
It's time it was put to bed."

So, looking a little sheepish.

But with faces strangely bright.

The audience, somewhat lingering,

Flocked out into the night.

And the bold-faced leader chuckled,

" He wasn't a bit afraid 1

He's as game as he's good-looking I

Boys, that was a show that pmd! '^

Margaret Vandergrift.

1SHOT him where the Rio flows;  
I shot him when the moon arose;  
And where he lies the vulture knows  
Along the Tinto River.

In schools of eastern culture pale  
My cloistered flesh began to fail;  
They bore me where the deserts quail  
To winds from out the sun.

I looked upon the land and sky,  
Nor hoped to live nor feared to die;  
And from my hollow breast a sigh  
Fell o'er the burning waste.

But strong I grew and tall I grew ;  
I drank the region's balm and dew, —  
It made me lithe in limb and thew, —  
How swift I rode and rani

And oft it was my joy to ride  
Over the sand-blown ocean wide  
While, ever smiling at my side,  
Rode Marta of Milrone.

46

Marta of Milrone

A flood of horned heads before,  
The trampled thunder, smoke and roar,

Of full four thousand hoofs, or more —  
A cloud, a sea, a storm 1

Oh, wonderful the desert gleamed.  
As, man and maid, we spoke and dreamed  
Of love in life, till white wastes seemed  
Like plains of paradise.

Her eyes with Love's great magic shone.  
\*\* Be mine, O Marta of Milrone, —  
Your hand, your heart be all my own!"  
Her lips made sweet response.

"I love you, yes; for you are he  
Who from the East should come to me —  
And I have waited long I " Oh, we  
Were happy as the sun.

There came upon a hopeless quest.  
With hell and hatred in his breast,  
A stranger, who his love confessed  
To Marta long in vain.

To me she spoke : '^ Chosen mate,  
His eyes are terrible with fate, —  
I fear his love, I fear his hate, —  
I fear some looming illl "

Then to the church we twain did ride,  
I kissed her as she rode beside.  
How fair — how passing fair my bride  
With gold combs in her hair 1

Before the Spanish priest we stood  
Of San Gregorio's brotherhood —  
A shot rang out 1 — and in her blood  
My dark-eyed darling lay.

God! I carried her beside

The Virgin's altar where she cried, — ^  
Smiling upon me ere she died,—  
\*' Adieu, my love, adieu 1 "

1 knelt before St. Mary's shrine

And held my dead one's hand in mine,  
" Vengeance," I cried, " O Lord, be thine,  
But I thy minister h"

I kissed her thrice and sealed my vow, —  
Her eyes, her sea-cold lips and brow, —  
" Farewell, my heart is dying now,

Marta of Milrone 1 "

Then swift upon my steed I leapt;  
My streaming eyes the desert swept ;

1 saw the accursed where he crept

Against the blood-red sun.

48

Marta of Milrone

I galloped straight upon his track,  
And never more my eyes looked back;  
The world was barred with red and black;  
My heart was flaming coal.

Through the delirious twilight dim  
And the black night I followed him;  
Hills did we cross and rivers swim, —  
My fleet foot horse and I.

The morn burst red, a gory wound,  
O'er iron hills and savage ground;  
And there was never another sound  
Save beat of horses' hoofs.

Unto the murderer's ear they said,

"Thou'rt of the dead! Thou'rt of the dead!"

Still on his stallion black he sped

While death spurred on behind.



Fiery dust from the blasted plain  
Burnt like lava in every vein ;  
But I rode on with steady rein  
Though the fierce sand-devils spun.

Then to a sullen land we came.

Whose earth was brass, whose sky was flame;

I made it balm with her blessed name

In the land of Mexico.

49

{

Marta of Milrone

With gasp and groan my poor horse fell, —  
Last of all things that loved me well  
I turned my head — a smoking shell  
Veiled me his dying throes.

But fast on vengeful foot was I ;  
His steed fell, too, and was left to die;  
He fled where a river's channel dry  
Made way to the rolling stream.

Red as my rage the huge sun sank.  
My foe bent low on the river's bank  
And deep of the kindly flood he drank  
While the giant stars broke forth.

Then face to face and man to man  
I fought him where the river ran,  
While the trembling palm held up its fan  
And the emerald serpents lay.

The mad, remorseless bullets broke  
  
From tongues of flame in the sulphur smoke;

The air was rent till the desert spoke  
  
To the echoing hills afar.

Hot from his lips the curses burst;  
He fell The sands were slaked of thirst;  
A stream in the stream ran dark at first,  
And the stones grew red as hearts.

50

Marta of Milrone

I shot him where the Rio flows ;  
I shot him when the moon arose;  
And where he lies the vulture knows  
Along the Tinto River.

But where she lies to none is known  
Save to my poor heart and a lonely stone  
On which I sit and weep alone  
Where the cactus stars are white.

Where I shall lie, no man can say;  
The flowers all are fallen away;  
The desert is so drear and grey,  
O Marta of Milrone 1

Herman Schefauer.

51

#### JACK DEMPSEY'S GRAVE

FAR out in the wilds of Oregon,  
On a lonely mountain side,  
Where Columbia's mighty waters  
Roll down to the Ocean's tide;  
Where the giant fir and cedar  
Are imaged in the wave,  
O'ergrown with ferns and lichens,  
I found poor Dempsey's grave.

I found no marble monolith,

No broken shaft nor stone.

Recording sixty victories

This vanquished victor won;

No rose, no shamrock could I find.

No mortal here to tell

Where sleeps in this forsaken spot

The immortal Nonpareil.

A winding, wooded canyon road

That mortals seldom tread

Leads up this lonely mountain

To this desert of the dead.

And the western sun was sinking

In Pacific's golden wave;

And these solemn pines kept watching

Over poor Jack Dempsey's grave.

52

Jack Dempsey's Grave

That man of honor and of iron,

That man of heart and steel,

That man who far out-classed his class

And made mankind to feel

That Dempsey's name and Dempsey's fame

Should live in serried stone,

Is now at rest far in the West

In the wilds of Oregon.

Forgotten by ten thousand throats

That thundered his acclaim —

Forgotten by his friends and foes

That cheered his very name;

Oblivion wraps his faded form.

But ages hence shall save

The memory of that Irish lad

That fills poor Dempsey's grave.

O Fame, why sleeps thy favored son

In wilds, in woods, in weeds?

And shall he ever thus sleep on —

Interred his valiant deeds?

'Tis strange New York should thus forget

Its "bravest of the brave,"

And in the wilds of Oregon

Unmarked, leave Dempsey's grave.

MacMahon.

53

#### THE CATTLE ROUND-UP

ONCE more are we met for a season of pleasure,  
That shall smooth from our brows every fur-  
row of care,  
For the sake of old times shall we each tread a meas-  
ure  
And drink to the lees in the eyes of the fair.  
Once more let the hand-clasp of years past be given ;  
Let us once more be boys and forget we are men ;  
Let friendships the chances of fortune have riven  
Be renewed and the smiling past come back again.  
The past, when the prairie was big and the cattle  
Were as " scary " as ever the antelope grew —  
When to carry a gun, to make our spurs rattle.  
And to ride a blue streak was the most that we knew ;  
The past when we headed each year for Dodge City  
And punched up the drags on the old Chisholm  
Trail ;  
When the world was all bright and the girls were all

pretty.

And a feller could \*\* mav'rick " and stay out of jail.

Then here's to the eyes that like diamonds are gleam-  
ing,

And make the lamps blush that their duties are o'er;

And here's to the lips where young love lies a-dream-  
ing;

54

#### The Cattle Round-Up

And here's to the feet light as air on the floor ;

And here's to the memories — fun's sweetest sequel ;

And here's to the night we shall ever recall;

And here's to the time — time shall know not its

equal

When we danced the day in at the Cattlemen's Ball.

H. D. C. McLachlan.

55

## PART II

### THE COWBOY OFF GUARD

/ am the plain, barren since time began.  
Yet do I dream of motherhood, when man  
One day at last shall look upon my charms  
And give me towns, like children, for my arms.

### A COWBOY'S WORRYING LOVE

IUST to read in the novel books 'bout fellers  
that got the prod  
From an arrer shot from his hidin' place by the

hand o' the Cupid god,  
An' I'd laugh at the cussed chumps they was

a-wastin' their breath in sighs  
An' goin' around with a locoed look a-campin'

inside their eyes.  
I've read o' the gals that broke 'em up a-sailin' in

airy flight  
On angel pinions above their beds as they dreampt



o' the same at night,

An' a sort o' disgusted frown'd bunch the wrinkles

acrost my brow,

An' I'd call 'em a lot o' sissy boys •■ — but I'm seein'

it different now.

I got the jab in my rough ol' heart, an' I got it

a-plenty, too,

A center shot from a pair o' eyes of the winninest sort

o' blue.

An' I ride the ranges a-sighin' sighs, as cranky as a

locoed steer —

A durned heap worse than the novel blokes that the

narrative gals'd queer.

59

A Cowboy's Worrying Love

Just hain't no energy left no mo', go 'round like a

orphant calf

A-thinkin' about that sagehen's eyes that give me the

Cupid gaS,

An' I'm all skeered up when I hit the thought some

other rider might

Cut in ahead on a faster hoss an' rope her afore my

sight.

There ain't a heifer that ever run in the feminine

beauty herd

Could switch a tail on the whole durned range 'long-

side o' that little bird;

A figger plump as a prairy dog's that's feedin' on

new spring grass,

An' as purty a face as was ever flashed in front of

a lookin' glass.

She's got a smile that 'd raise the steam in the icyist

sort o' heart,

A couple o' soul inspirin' eyes, an' the nose that keeps

'em apart

Is the cutest thing in the sassy line that ever oc-

curred to act

As a ornament stuck on a purty face, an' that's a

dead open fact.

I'm a-goin' to brace her by an' by to see if there's

any hope.

To see if she's liable to shy when I'm ready to pitch

the rope;

60

### A Cowboy's Worrying Love

To see if she's goin' to make a stand, or fly like a

skeered up dove

When I make a pass with the brandin' iron that's

het in the fire o' love,

ril open the little home corral an' pve her the

level hunch

To make a run fur the open gate when I cut her

out o' the bunch,

Fur there ain't no sense in a-jammin' round with a

heart that's as soft as dough

An' a-throwin' the breath o' life away bunched up

into sighs. Heigh-ho I

James Barton Adams.

## THE COWBOY AND THE MAID

FUNNY how it come about I  
Me and Texas Tom was out  
Takin' of a moonlight walk,  
Fillin' in the time with talk.  
Every star up in the sky  
Seemed to wink the other eye  
At each other, 'sif they  
Smelt a mouse around our way I

Me and Tom had never grew  
Spoony like some couples do;  
Never billed and cooed and sighed;  
He was bashful like and I'd  
Notions of my own that it  
Wasn't policy to git  
Too abundant till I'd got  
Of my feller good and caught.

As we walked along that night  
He got talkin' of the bright  
Prospects that he had, and I  
Somehow felt, I dunno why.  
That a-fore we cake-walked back  
To the ranch he'd make a crack

## The Cowboy and the Maid

Fer my hand, and I was plum  
Achin' fer the shock to come.

By and by he says, " I've got  
Fifty head o' cows, and not  
One of 'em but, on the dead,  
Is a crackin' thoroughbred.  
Got a daisy claim staked out,  
And I'm thinkin' it's about  
Time fer me to make a shy  
At a home." " O Tom I " says I.

" Bin a-lookin' round," says he,  
" Quite a little while to see  
'F I could git a purty face  
Fer to ornament the place.  
Plenty of 'em in the land ;  
But the one 'at wears my brand  
Must be sproutin' wings to fly I "  
" You deserve her, Tom," says I.

" Only one so fur," says he,  
'\* Fills the bill, and mebbe she  
Might shy off and bust my hope  
If I should pitch the poppin' rope.  
Mebbe she'd git hot an' say

That it was a silly play

Askin' her to make a tie."

\*\* She would be a fool," says I.

63

(

The Cowboy and the Maid

'Tain't nobody's business what

Happened then, but I jist thought

I could see the moon-man smile

Cutely down upon us, while

Me and him was walkin' back, —

Stoppin' now and then to smack

Lips rejoicin' that at last

The dread crisis had been past

Anonymous.

64

A COWBOY'S LOVE SONG

OH, the last steer has been branded  
And the last beef has been shipped,  
And I'm free to roam the prairies  
That the round-up crew has stripped;  
I'm free to think of Susie, —  
Fairer than the stars above, —  
She's the waitress at the station  
And she is my turtle dove.

Biscuit-shootin' Susie, —  
She's got us roped and tied;  
Sober men or woozy  
Look on her with pride.  
Susie's strong and able,  
And not a one gits rash  
When she waits on the table  
And superintends the hash.

Oh, I sometimes think I'm locoed  
An' jes fit fer herdin' sheep,  
'Cause I only think of Susie  
When I'm wakin' or I'm sleep.  
I'm wearin' Cupid's hobbles.  
An' I'm tied to Love's stake-pin,  
And when my heart was branded  
The irons sunk deep in.

Chorus : —

I take my saddle, Sundays, —  
The one with inlaid flaps, —  
And don my new sombrero  
And my white angora chaps;  
Then I take a bronc for Susie  
And she leaves her pots and pans  
And we figure out our future  
And talk o'er our homestead plans.

Chorus : —

Anonymous.

66

#### A BORDER AFFAIR

SPANISH is the lovin' tongue,  
Soft as music, light as spray;  
'Twas a girl I learnt it from  
Livin' down Sonora way.  
I don't look much like a lover,  
Yet I say her love-words over  
Often, when I'm all alone —  
'\* Mi amor, mi corazon.\*'

Nights when she knew where I'd ride



She would listen for my spurs.  
Throw the big door open wide.

Raise them laughin' eyes of hers.  
And my heart would nigh stop beatin'  
When I'd hear her tender greetin'

Whispered soft for me alone —

" Mi amor I mi corazoni '\*

Moonlight in the patio.

Old Seiora noddin' near,  
Me and Juana talkin' low

So the " madre " couldn't hear —  
How those hours would go a-flyin'.  
And too soon I'd hear her sighin',

In her little sorry-tone —

" Adios, mi corazon/^

67

A Border A fair

But one time I had to fly

For a foolish gamblin' fight,  
And we said a swift good-bye

On that black, unlucky night.  
When I'd loosed her arms from clingin',  
With her words the hoofs kept ringin',

As I galloped north alone —

"Adios, mi corazon/"

Never seen her since that night;

I kaint cross the Line, you know.  
She was Mex. and I was white;

Like as not it's better so.  
Yet I've always sort of missed her  
Since that last, wild night I kissed her.

Left her heart and lost my own —

" Adios, mi corazon/\*

Charles B. Clark, Jr.

I WAS young and happy and my heart was light  
and gay,  
Singin', always singin' through the sunny summer

day;  
Happy as a lizard in the wavin' chaparral,  
Walkin' down through Laramie with Snagtooth Sal.

Sal, Sal,

My heart is broke today —

Broke in two forever when they laid you in the  
clay ;

I would give creation to be walkin' with my  
gal —

Walkin' down through Laramie with Snag-  
tooth Sal.

Bury me tomorrow where the lily blossoms spring  
Underneath the willows where the little robins sing.  
You will yearn to see me — but ah, nevermore you

shall —  
Walkin' down through Laramie with Snagtooth Sal.

Refrain : —

Plant a little stone above the little mound of sod;  
Write : \*\* Here lies a lovin' an' a busted heart,

begod !

69

Snagtooth Sal

Nevermore you'll see him walkin' proudly with his

gal —

Walkin' down through Laramie with Snagtooth Sal."

Sal, Sal,

My heart is broke today —

Broke in two forever when they laid you in the  
clay ;

I would give creation to be walkin' with my  
gal —

Walkin' down through Laramie with Snag-  
tooth Sal.

Lowell O. Reese,

In the Saturday Evening Post.

70

## LOVE LYRICS OF A COWBOY

IT hain^t no use fer me to say  
There's others with a style an' way  
That beats hers to a fare-you-well,  
Fer, on the square, I'm here to tell  
I jes can't even start to see  
But what she's perfect as kin be.  
Fer any fault I finds excuse —  
I'll tell you, pard, it hain't no use  
Fer me to try to raise a hand,  
When on my heart she's run her brand.

The bunk-house ain't the same to me;  
The bunch jes makes me weary — Gee I  
I never knew they was so coarse —  
I warps my face to try to force  
A smile at each old gag they spring;  
Fer I'd heap ruthfer hear her sing  
" Sweet Adeline," or softly play  
The " Dream o' Heaven " that-a-way.  
Besides this place, most anywhere  
I'd ruther be — so she was there.

She called me " dear," an' do you know,  
My heart jes skipped a beat, an' tho'  
I'm hard to feaze, I'm free to yip

## Love Lyrics of a Cowboy

My reason nearly lost its grip.

She called me " dear," jes sweet an' slow,

An' lookin' down an' speakin' low ;

An' if I had ten lives to live,

With everything the world could give,

I'd shake 'em all without one fear

If 'fore I'd go she'd call me " dear."

You wonders why I slicks up so

On Sundays, when I gits to go

To see her — well, I'm free to say

She's like religion that-a-way.

Jes sort o' like some holy thing.

As clean as young grass in the spring;

An' so before I rides to her

I looks my best from hat to spur —

But even then I hain't no right

To think I look good in her sight.

If she should pass me up — say, boy,

You jes put hobbles on your joy;

First thing you know, you gits so gay

Your luck stampedes and gits away.

An' don't you even start a guess

That you've a cinch on happiness ;

Fer few e'er reach the Promised Land

If they starts headed by a band.

Ride slow an' quiet, humble, too.

Or Fate will slap its brand on you.

12

Love Lyrics of a Cowboy

The old range sleeps, there hain't a stir.

Less it's a night-hawk's sudden whir,

Or cottonwoods a-whisperin' while

The red moon smiles a lovin' smile.

An' there I set an' hold her hand

So glad I jes can't understand

The reason of it all, or see

Why all the world looks good to me ;

Or why I sees in it heap more

Of beauty than I seen before.

Fool talk, perhaps, but it jes seems

We're ridin' through a range o' dreams;

Where medder larks the year i-ound sing,

An' it's jes one eternal spring.

An' time — why time is gone — by gee I

There's no such thing as time to me

Until she says, " Here, boy, yOu know

You simply jes have got to go;

It's nearly twelve." I rides away,

" Dog-gone a clock! " is what I say.

R. V. Cart.

73

#### THE BULL FIGHT

THE couriers from Chihuahua go

To distant Cusi and Santavo,

Announce the feast of all the year the crown —

Se corren los torosi



And Juan brings his Pepita into town.

The rancherias on the mountain side,

The haciendas of the Llano wide,

Are quickened by the matador's renown.

Se corren los torosi

And Juan brings his Pepita into town.

The women that on ambling burros ride,

The men that trudge behind or close beside

Make groups of dazzling red and white and brown.

Se corren los torosi

And Juan brings his Pepita into town.

Or else the lumbering carts are brought in play.

That jolt and scream and groan along the way,

But to their happy tenants cause no frown.

Se corren los torosi

And Juan brings his Pepita into town.

The Plaza De Los Toros offers seats.

Some deep in shade, on some the fierce sun beats ;

## The Bull Fight

These for the don, those for the rustic clown.

Se corren los toros!

And Juan brings his Pepita into town.

Pepita sits, so young and sweet and fresh,  
The sun shines on her hair's dusky mesh.  
Her day of days, how soon it will be flown I  
Se corren los toros!  
And Juan's brought his Pepita into town.

The bull is harried till the governor's word  
Bids the Diestro give the agile sword;  
Then shower the bravos and the roses down I  
'Sta muerto el toro!

And Juan takes his Pepita back from the town.

L. Vorthington Green.

SAY, Moll, now don't you 'How to quit

A-playin' maverick?

Sech stock should be corralled a bit

An' hev a mark 't '11 stick.

Old Val's a-roundin'-up today

Upon the Sweetheart Range,

'N me a-helpin', so to say.

Though this yere herd is strange

•

To me — 'n yit, ef I c'd rope

Jes one to wear my brand

I'd strike f'r Home Ranch on a lope,

The happiest in the land.

Yo' savvy who I'm runnin' so,

Yo' savvy who I be;

Now, can't yo' take that brand — yo' know, —

The V M-I-N-E.

C F. Lummis,

## A COWBOY'S HOPELESS LOVE

I'VE heard that story oftentimes about that little  
chap  
A-cryin' for the shiney moon to fall into his lap,  
An' jes a-raisin' merry hell because he couldn't git  
The same to swing down low so's he could nab a-holt

of it,  
An' I'm a-feelin' that-a-way, locoed I reckon, wuss  
Than that same kid, though maybe not a-makin' sich

a fuss, —  
A-goin' round with achin' eyes a-hankerin' fer a

peach  
That's hangin' on the beauty tree, too high fer me

to reach.

I'm jes a rider of the range, plumb rough an' on-  
refined.

An' wild an' keerless in my ways, like others of my  
kind ;

A reckless cuss in leather chaps, an' tanned an' black-  
ened so

You'd think I wuz a Greaser from the plains of

Mexico.

I never learnt to say a prayer, an' guess my style o'  
talk.

If fired off in a Sunday School would give 'em all  
a shock;

77

A Cowboy's Hopeless Love

An' yet I got a-mopin' round as crazy as a loon  
An' actin' like the story kid that bellered fer the  
moon.

I wish to God she'd never come with them bright

laughin' eyes, —

Had never flashed that smile that seems a sunburst

from the skies, —

Had stayed there in her city home instead o' comin'

here

To visit at the ranch an' knock my heart plumb out

o' gear.

I wish to God she'd talk to me in a way to fit the

case, —

In words t'd have a tendency to hold me in my

place, —

Instead o' bein' sociable an' actin' like she thought

Us cowboys good as city gents in clothes that's tailor

bought.

If I would hint to her o' love, she'd hit that love a

jar

An' laugh at sich a tough as me a-tryin' to rope a

star;

She'd give them fluffy skirts a flirt, an' skate out o'

my sight.

An' leave me paralyzed, — an' it'd serve me cussed

right.

I wish she'd pack her pile o' trunks an' hit the city

track,

78

A Cowboy^ s Hopeless Love

An' maybe I'd recover from this violent attack;

An' in the future know enough to watch my feedin'

ground

An' shun the loco weed o' love when there's an angel

round.

James Barton Adams.

79

#### THE CHASE

HERE'S a moccasin track in the drifts,  
It's no more than the length of my hand;  
An\* her instep, — just see how it lifts I  
If that ain't the best in the land I  
For the maid ran as free as the wind  
And her foot was as light as the snow.  
Why, as sure as I follow, I'll find  
Me a kiss where her red blushes grow.

Here's two small little feet and a skirt;

Here's a soft little heart all aglow.

See me trail down the dear little flirt

By the sign that she left in the snow I

Did she run? 'Twas a sign to make haste.

An' why bless her ! I'm sure she won't mind.

If she's got any kisses to waste.

Why, she knew that a man was behind.

Did she run 'cause she's only afraid?

No ! For sure 'twas to set me the pace I

An' I'll follow in love with a maid

When I ain't had a sight of her face.

There she is 1 An' I knew she was near.

Will she pay me a kiss to be free ?

Will she hate? Will she love? Will she fear?

Why, the darling I She's waiting to see !

Pocock in " Curley/'

80

#### RIDING SONG

1ET us ride together, —

J Blowing mane and hair,

Careless of the weather,



Miles ahead of care,  
Ring of hoof and snaffle,  
Swing of waist and hip,  
Trotting down the twisted road  
With the world let slip.

Let us laugh together, —  
Merry as of old  
To the creak of leather  
And the morning cold.  
Break into a canter ;  
Shout to bank and tree;  
Rocking down the waking trail,  
Steady hand and knee.

Take the life of cities, —  
Here's the life for me.  
'Twere a thousand pities  
Not to gallop free.  
\*So we'll ride together,  
Comrade, you and I,  
Careless of the weather.  
Letting care go by.

8i

Anonymous.

## OUR LITTLE COWGIRL

THAR she goes a-lopin', stranger,  
Khaki-gowned, with flyin' hair,  
Talk about your classy ridin', —  
Wal, you're gettin' it right thar.  
Jest a kid, but lemme tell you  
When she warms a saddle seat  
On that outlaw bronc a-straddle  
She is one that can't be beat !

Every buckaroo that sees her  
Tearin' cross the range astride  
Has some mighty jealous feelin's  
Wishin' he knowed how to ride.  
Why, she'll take a deep barranca  
Six-foot wide and never peep ;  
That 'ere cayuse she's a-forkin\*  
Sure 's somethin' on the leap.

Ride? Why, she can cut a critter  
From the herd as neat as pie.  
Read a brand out on the ranges  
Just as well as you or I.  
Ain't much yet with the riata,  
But you give her a few years  
And no puncher with the outfit  
Will beat her a-ropin' steers.

### Our Little Cowgirl

Proud o' her ? Say, lemme tell you,  
She's the queen of all the range ;  
Got a grip upon our heart-strings  
Mighty strong, but that ain't strange ;  
'Cause she loves the lowin' cattle,  
Loves the hills and open air,  
Dusty trails on blossomed canons  
God has strung around out here.

Hoof-beats poundin' down the mesa.  
Chicken-time in lively tune.  
Jest below the trail to Keeber's, —  
Wait, you'll see her pretty soon.  
You kin bet I know that ridin', —  
Now she's toppin' yonder swell.  
Thar she is ; that's her a-smilin'  
At the bars of the corral.

Anonymous.

83

### SONG OF THE CATTLE TRAIL

THE dust hangs thick upon the trail  
And the horns and the hoofs are clashing,

While off at the side through the chaparral  
The men and the strays go crashing ;  
But in right good cheer the cowboy sings,  
For the work of the fall is ending,  
And then it's ride for the old home ranch  
Where a maid love's light is tending.

Then it's crack I crack I crack I

On the beef steer's back.

And it's run, you slow-foot devil;

For I'm soon to turn back where through the black

Love's lamp gleams along the level.

He's trailed them far o'er the trackless range.

Has this knight of the saddle leather;

He has risked his life in the mad stampede,

And has breasted all kinds of weather.

But now is the end of the trail in sight.

And the hours on wings are sliding ;

For it's back to the home and the only girl

When the foreman O K's the option.

Then it's quirt I quirt ! quirt !

And it's run or git hurt,

86

Sofiff of the Cattle Trail

You hang-back, bawling critter.

For a man who's in love with a turtle dove

Ain't got no time to fritter.

Anonymous.

87

A COWBOY'S SON

WH AR y'u from, little stranger, little boy ?

Y'u was ridin' a cloud on that star-strewn  
plain,

But y'u fell from the skies like a drop of rain

To this world of sorrow and long, long pain.

Will y'u care fo' yo' mothah, little boy?

When y'u grows, little varmint, little boy,

Y' u'll be ridin' a boss by yo'\* fathah's side  
With yo' gun and yo' spurs and yo' howstrong pride.  
Will y'u think of yo' home when the world rolls

wide?

Will y'u wish for yo' mothah, little boy ?

When y'u love in yo' manhood, little boy, —  
When y'u dream of a girl who is angel fair, —  
When the stars are her eyes and the wind is her

hair, —

When the sun is her smile and yo' heaven's there, —  
Will y'u care for yo' mothah, little boy ?

Pocock in " CurleyJ

}f

88

A COWBOY SONG

I COULD not be so well content,  
So sure of thee,  
Senorita,

But well I know you must relent

And come to me,

Lolita I

The Caballeros throng to see

Thy laughing face,

Senorita,

Lolita.

But well I know thy heart's for me.

Thy charm, thy grace,

Lolita !

I ride the range for thy dear sake.

To earn thee gold,

Senorita,

Lolita ;

And steal the gringo's cows to make

A ranch to hold

Lolita !

Pocock in " Curley/\*

A NEVADA COWPUNCHER TO HIS

BELOVED

10NESOME? Well, I guess so I  
J This place is mighty blue ;  
The silence of the empty rooms  
Jes' palpitates with — you.

The day has lost its beauty,  
The sun's a-shinin' pale;  
I'll round up my belongin's  
An' I guess I'll hit the trail.

Out there in the sage-brush  
A-harkin' to the " Coo-oo "  
Of the wild dove in his matin'  
I can think alone of you.

Perhaps a gaunt coyote

Will go a-lopin' by

An' linger on the mountain ridge

An' cock his wary eye.



An' when the evenin' settles,  
A-waitin' for the dawn  
Perhaps I'll hear the ground owl :  
" She's gone — she's gone — she's gone I "

Anon'jmous.

90

#### THE COWBOY TO HIS FRIEND IN NEED

YOU'RE very well polished, Fm free to confess,  
Well balanced, well rounded, a power for right ;  
But cool and collected, — no steel could be less ;  
You're primed for continual fight.

Your voice is a bellicose bark of ill-will,  
On hatred and choler you seem to have fed ;  
But when I control you, your temper is nil ;  
In fact, you're most easily led.

Though lead is your diet and fight is your fun,  
I simply can't give you the jolt;  
For I love you, you blessed old son-of-a-gun, —  
You forty-five caliber Colt 1

Burke Jenkins.

91

\

WHEN BOB GOT THROWN

THAT time when Bob got thrown

I thought I sure would bust.

I like to died a-laffin'

To see him chewin' dust.

He crawled on that Andy bronc

And hit him with a quirt.

The next thing that he knew

He was wallowin' in the dirt.

Yes, it might a-killed him,

I heard the old ground pop ;

But to see if he was injured

You bet I didn't stop.

I just rolled on the ground

And began to kick and yell ;

It like to tickled me to death

To see how hard he fell.

'Twarn't more than a week ago  
That I myself got throwed,  
(But 'twas from a meaner horse  
Than old Bob ever rode).

92

When Boh Got Throwed

D'you reckon Bob looked sad and said,  
" I hope that you ain't hurt I "  
Naw! He just laffed and laffed and laffed  
To see me chewin' dirt.

I've been prayin' ever since  
For his horse to turn his pack;  
And when he done it, I'd a laffed  
If it had broke his back.

So I was still a-<howlin'

When Bob, he got up lame ;

He seen his horse had run clean off

And so for me he came.

He first chucked sand into my eyes,  
With a rock he rubbed my head.

Then he twisted both my arms, —  
" Now go fetch that horse," he said.

So I went and fetched him back.  
But I was feelin' good all day;  
For I sure enough do love to see  
A feller get throwed that way.

Ray.

93

#### COWBOY VERSUS BRONCHO

HAVEN'T got no special likin' fur the toney  
sorts o' play,  
Chasin' foxes or that hossback polo game,  
Jumpin' critters over hurdles — sort o' things that  
any jay  
Could accomplish an' regard as rather tame.  
None o' them is worth a mention, to my thinkin'  
p'int o' view,  
Which the same I hold correct without a doubt,  
As a-toppin' of a broncho that has got it in fur you  
An' concludes that's just the time to have it out.

Don't no sooner hit the saddle than the exercises  
start.

An' they're lackin' in perliminary fuss ;

You kin hear his j'int's a-crackin' like he's breakin'  
'em apart,  
An' the hide jes' seems a-rippin' off the cuss,  
An' you sometimes git a joltin' that makes every-  
thing turn blue.  
An' you want to strictly mind what you're about.  
When you're fightin' with a broncho that has got it  
in fur you  
An' imagines that's the time to have it out.

94

#### Cowboy Versus Broncho

Bows his back when he is risin', sticks his nose be-  
tween his knees,  
An' he shakes hisself while a-hangin' in the air;  
Then he hits the earth so solid that it somewhat dis-  
agrees  
With the usual peace an' quiet of your hair.  
You imagine that your innards are a-gittin' all  
askew,  
An' your spine don't feel so cussed firm an' stout,  
When you're up agin a broncho that has got it in  
fur you  
Doin' of his level best to have it out.

He will rise to the occasion with a lightnin' jump, an'  
then

When he hits the face o' these United States  
Doesn't linger half a second till he's in the air agin —

Occupies the earth an' then evacuates.  
Isn't any sense o' comfort like a-settin' in a pew

Listenin' to hear a sleepy parson spout  
When you're up on top a broncho that has got it in  
fur you

An' is desputly a-tryin' to have it out.

Always feel a touch o' pity when he has to give  
it up  
After makin' sich a well intentioned buck  
An' is standin' broken hearted an' as gentle as a pup  
A reflectin' on the rottenness o' luck.

95

#### Cowboy Versus Broncho

Puts your sympathetic feelin's, as you might say, in  
a stew,  
Though you're lame as if a-suff'erin' from the gout,  
When you're lightin' off a broncho that has had it in  
fur you  
An' mistook the proper time to have it out. •

James Barton Adams.

## WHEN YOU'RE THROWN

IF a feller's been a-straddle  
Since he's big enough to ride,  
And has had to sling his saddle  
On most any colored hide, —  
Though it's nothin' they take pride in,  
Still most fellers I have knowed.  
If they ever done much ridin'.  
Has at different times got throwed.

All the boys start out together  
For the round-up some fine day  
When you're due to throw your leather  
On a little wall-eyed bay,  
An' he swells to beat the nation  
When you're cinchin' up the slack,  
An' he keeps an elevation  
In your saddle at the back.

He stands still with feet a-sprawlin\  
An' his eye shows lots of white.  
An' he kinks his spinal column.  
An' his hide is puckered tight.  
He starts risin' an' a-jumpin'.  
An' he strikes when you get near,

### When Yotire Threwed

An' you cuss him an' you thump him  
Till you get him by the ear, —

Then your right hand grabs the saddle  
An' you ketch your stirrup, too,  
An' you try to light a-straddle  
Like a woolly buckaroo ;  
But he drops his head an' switches,  
Then he makes a backward jump.  
Out of reach your stirrup twitches  
But your right spur grabs his hump.

An' " Stay with him! " shouts some feller;  
Though you know it's hope forlorn,  
Yet you'll show that you ain't yeller  
An' you choke the saddle horn.  
Then you feel one rein a-droppin'  
An' you know he's got his head;  
An' your shirt tail's out an' floppin' ;  
An' the saddle pulls like lead.

Then the boys all yell together  
Fit to make a feller sick:  
" Hey, you short horn, drop the leather !



Fan his fat an' ride him slick 1 "  
Seems you're up-side-down an' flyin';  
Then your spurs begin to slip.  
There's no further use in tryin',  
For the horn flies from your grip,

98

#### When YouWe Threwed

An' you feel a vague sensation  
As upon the ground you roll,  
Like a violent separation  
'Twixt your body an' your soul.  
Then you roll agin a hummock  
Where you lay an' gasp for breath,  
An' there's somethin' grips your stomach  
Like the finger-grips o' death.

They all offers you prescriptions  
For the grip an' for the croup.  
An' they give you plain descriptions  
How you looped the spiral loop ;  
They all swear you beat a circus  
Or a hoochy-koochy dance,  
Moppin' up the canon's surface  
With the bosom of your pants.

Then you'll get up on your trotters,  
But you have a job to stand;  
For the landscape round you totters

An' your collar's full o' sand.  
Lots of fellers give prescriptions  
How a broncho should be rode.  
But there's few that gives descriptions  
Of the times when they got throwed.

Anonymous.

99

#### PARDNERS

YOU bad-eyed, tough-mouthed son-of-a-gun,  
Ye're a hard little beast to break,  
But ye're good for the fiercest kind of a run  
An' ye're quick as a rattlesnake.  
Ye jolted me good when we first met  
In the dust of that bare corral.  
An' neither one of us will forget  
The fight we fit, old pal.

But now — well, say, old boss, if John

D. Rockefeller shud come

With all the riches his paws are on

And want to buy you, you bum,

I'd laugh in his face an' pat your neck

An' say to him loud an' strong :

" I wouldn't sell you this derved old wreck

For all your wealth — so long 1 "

For we have slept on the barren plains

An' cuddled against the cold;

We've been through tempests of drivin' rains

When the heaviest thunder rolled;

We've raced from fire on the lone prairie

An' run from the mad stampede ;

An' there ain't no money could buy from me

A pard of your style an' breed.

IOO

Pardners

So I reckon we'll stick together, pard,

Till one of us cashes in;

Ye' re wirey an' tough an' mighty hard,

An' homlier, too, than sin.

But ycr head's all there an' ycr heart's all right.

An' you've been a good pardner, too.

An' if ye've a soul it's clean an' white.

You ugly ol' scoundrel, you I

Berton Braley.

IOI

THE BRONC THAT WOULDN'T BUST

I'VE busted bronchos oif and on I

Since first I struck their trail, ]

And you bet I savvy bronchos

From nostrils down to tail;

But I struck one on Powder River,

And say, hands, he was the first

And only living broncho

That your servant couldn't burst.

He was a no-count buckskin, .

Wasn't worth two-bits to keep.

Had a black stripe down his backbone, 1

And was woolly like a sheep. !

That boss wasn't built to tread the earth ;

He took natural to the air;

And every time he went aloft

He tried to leave me there.

He went so high above the earth

Lights from Jerusalem shone. m

Right thar we parted company

And he came down alone.

I hit terra firma.

The buckskin's heels struck free,

And brought a bunch of stars along

To dance in front of me.

### The Bronc That Wouldn't Bust

I'm not a-riding airships

Nor an electric flying beast ;

Ain't got no rich relation

A-waitin' me back East;

So I'll sell my chaps and saddle,

My spurs can lay and rust;

For there's now and then a digger

That a buster cannot bust.

Anonymous.

### THE OU COW HAWSE

WHEN it comes to saddle hawses, there's a dif-

ference in steeds :

There is fancy-gaited critters that will suit some

feller's needs;

There is nags high-bred an' tony, with a smooth an'

shiny skin,

That will capture all the races that you want to run

'em in.

But fer one that never tires ; one that's faithful, tried

and true ;

One that alius is a " stayer " when you want to

slam him through,

There is but one breed o' critters that I ever came

across

That will alius stand the racket: 'tis the

or

Cow

Hawse I

No, he ain't so much fer beauty, fer he's scrubby an'

he's rough.

An' his temper's sort o' sassy, but you bet he's good

enough I

Fer he'll take the trail o' mornin's, be it up or be it

down,

104

### The OP Cow Hawse

On the range a-huntin' cattle or a-lopin' into town,  
An' he'll leave the miles behind him, an' he'll never

sweat a hair,  
'Cuz he's a willin' critter when he's goin' anywhere.  
Oh, your thoroughbred at runnin' in a race may be

the boss,  
But fer all day ridin' lemme have the

or

Cow  
Hawse I

When my soul seeks peace and quiet on the home

ranch of the blest.  
Where no storms or stampedes bother, an' the trails

are trails o' rest.  
When my brand has been inspected an' pronounced

to be O K,



An' the boss has looked me over an' has told me I

kin stay.

Oh, I'm hopin' when I'm lopin' off across that

blessed range

That I won't be in a saddle on a critter new an'

strange.

But I'm prayin' every minnit that up there I'll ride

across

That big heaven range o' glory on an

or

Cow

Hawse 1

E. A. Brtnninstool.

105

#### THE BUNK-HOUSE ORCHESTRA

WRANGLE up your mouth-harps, drag your

banjo out,

Tune your old guitarra till she twangs right stout,

For the snow is on the mountains and the wind is on

the plain.

But we'll cut the chimney's moanin' with a livelier

refrain.

Shinin' dobe fire-place, shadows on the wall

{See old Shorty's friv'lous toes a-twitchin' at

the call:)

It's the best grand high that there is within the

law

When seven jolly punchers tackle " Turkey in

the Straw."

«

Freezy was the day's ride, lengthy was the trail,

Ev'ry steer was haughty with a high-arched tail.

But we held 'em and we shoved 'em for our longin'

hearts were tried

By a yearnin' for tobaccer and our dear fireside.

Swing 'er into stop-time, don't you let 'er droop

{You're about as tuneful as a coyote with the

croup!)

io6

The Bunk-House Orchestra

Ay, the cold wind bit when we drifted down the

draw,

But we drifted on to comfort and to " Turkey

in the Straw'\*

Snarlin' when the rain whipped, cussin' at the ford —

Ev'ry mile of twenty was a long discord,

But the night is brimmin' music and its glory is complete

When the eye is razzle-dazzled by the flip o' Shorty's feet I

Snappy for the dance, now, till she up and

shoots/

(Don't he beat the devil's wife for jiggin' in

his boots?)

Shorty got throwed high and we laughed till he

was raw.

But tonight he's done forgot it prancin' " Tur^

key in the Straw."

Rainy dark or firelight, bacon rind or pie,

Livin' is a luxury that don't come high ;

Oh, be happy and onruly while our years and luck

allow.

For we all must die or marry less than forty years

from now!

Lively on the last turn! Lope 'er to the death!

{Reddy's soul is willin' but he's gettin' short o'  
breath.)

107

The Bunk-House Orchestra

Ay, the storm wind sings and old trouble sucks  
his paw

When we have an hour of firelight set to "Tur-  
key in the Straw."

Charles Badger Clark.

io8

THE COWBOY'S DANCE SONG

YOU can't expect a cowboy to agitate his shanks  
In etiquettish manner in aristocratic ranks  
When he's always been accustomed to shake the heel

and toe

At the rattling rancher dances where much etiquet

don't go.

You can be^ I set them laughing in quite an excited

way, '

A-giving of their squintcrs an astonished sort of play,

When I happened into Denver and was asked to take

a prance

In the smooth and easy mazes of a high-toned dance.

When I got among the ladies in their frocks of fleecy

white.

And the dudes toggled out in wrappings that were

simply out of sight.

Tell you what, I was embarrassed, and somehow I

couldn't keep

From feeling like a burro in a pretty flock of sheep.

Every step I made was awkward and I blushed a

fiery red

Like the principal adornment of a turkey gobbler's

head.

## The Cowboy's Dance Song

The ladies said 'twas seldom that they had had the

ch<sup>^</sup>ance

To see an old-time puncher at a high-toned dance.

I cut me out a heifer from a bunch of pretty girls  
And yanked her to the center to dance the dreamy

whirls.

She laid her head upon my bosom in a loving sort

of way

And we drifted into heaven as the band began to

play.

I could feel my neck a-burning from her nose's

breathing heat,

And she do-ce-dood around me, half the time upon

my feet;

She peered up in my blinkers with a soul-dissolving

glance

Quite conducive to the pleasures of a high-toned

dance.

Every nerve just got a-dancing to the music of de-

light

As I hugged the little sagehen uncomfortably tight;

But she never made a bellow and the glances of her  
eyes ^

Seemed to thank me for the pleasure of a genuine  
surprise.

She snuggled up against me in a loving sort of way,

And I hugged her all the tighter for her trustifying  
play, —

no

J

The Cowboy's Dance Song

Tell you what the joys of heaven ain't a cussed cir-  
cumstance

To the hug-a-mania pleasures of a high-toned dance.

When they struck the old cotillion on the music bill

of fare,

Every bit of devil in me seemed to burst out on a

tear.

I fetched a cowboy whoop and started in to rag,  
And cut her with my trotters till the floor began to

sag;

Swung my pardner till she got sea-sick and rushed

for a seat;

I balanced to the next one but she dodged me slick

and neat. —

Tell you what, I shook the creases from my go-to-  
meeting pants

When I put the cowboy trimmings on that high-toned

dance.

James Barton Adams.

III

#### THE COWBOYS' CHRISTMAS BALL

\*T¥ rAY out in Western Texas, where the Clear  
VV Fork's waters flow,

Where the cattle are " a-browzin'," and the Spanish  
ponies grow;



Where the Norther \*\* comes a-whistlin' " from beyond the Neutral strip

And the prairie dogs are sneezin', as if they had "the Grip";

Where the coyotes come a-howlin' round the ranches after dark,

And the mocking-birds are singin' to the lovely " medder lark " ;

Where the 'possum and the badger, and rattle-snakes abound.

And the monstrous stars are winkin' o'er a wilderness profound;

Where lonesome, tawny prairies melt into airy streams,

While the Double Mountains slumber in heavenly kinds of dreams;

Where the antelope is grazin' and the lonely plovers call —

It was there that I attended \*\* The Cowboys' Christmas Ball."

## The Cowboys' Christinas Ball

The town was Anson City, old Jones's county seat,  
Where they raise Polled Angus cattle, and waving

whiskered wheat;

Where the air is soft and " bammy," an' dry an'

full of health,

And the prairies is explodin' with agricultural

wealth ;

Where they print the Texas Western, that Hec. Mc-

Cann supplies,

With news and yarns and stories, of most amazin'

size;

Where Frank Smith " pulls the badger," on knowin'

tender feet.

And Democracy's trimnphant, and mighty hard to

beat;

Where lives that good old hunter, John Milsap from

Lamar,

Who \*\* used to be the sheriff, back East, in Paris,

sahl"

'Twas there, I say, at Anson, with the lively

" Widder Wall,"

That I went to that reception, " The Cowboys'

Christmas Ball."

The boys had left the ranches and come to town in

piles ;

The ladies — " kinder scatterin' " — had gathered in

for miles.

And yet the place was crowded, as I remember well,

113

The Cowboys^ Christinas Ball

'Twas got for the occasion at " The Morning Star  
Hotel."

The niusic was a fiddle and a lively tambourine,

And a " viol come imported," by stage from Abilene.

The room was togged out gorgeous — with mistle-  
toe and shawls,

And candles flickered frescoes around the airy w

The " wimmin folks " looked lovely — the be

looked kinder treed.

Till their leader commenced yellin' : " Whoa, fellers, let's stampede."

The music started sighin' and a-wailin' through the hall.

As a kind of introduction to \*\* The Cowboys' Christmas Ball."

The leader was a fellow that came from Swenson's Ranch,

They called him " Windy Billy," from " little Dead-man's Branch."

His rig was '\* kinder keerless," big spurs and high-heeled boots ;

He had the reputation that comes when ^' fellers shoots."

His voice was like the bugle upon the mountain's height ;

His feet were animated, an' a mighty movin' sight,

When he commenced to holler, \*\* Neow, fellers, stake ycr pen I

U4

## The Cowboys\* Christmas Ball

Lock horns to all them heifers, an' russle 'cm like

men.

Saloot ycr lovely critters; neow swing an' let 'em

Climb the grape vine round 'em — all hands do-  
ce-do !

You Mavericks, jine the round-up — Jest skip her  
waterfall,"

Huh ! hit wuz gittin' happy, " The Cowboys' Christ-  
mas Ball I"

The boys were tolerable skittish, the ladies power-  
ful neat.

That old bass viol's music just got there with both  
feet.

That wailin' frisky fiddle, I never shall forget;

And Windy kept a singin' — I think I hear him  
yet —

" O Xes, chase your squirrels, an' cut 'em to one  
side.

Spur Treadwell to the center, with Cross P Char-

ley's bride.

Doc. HoUis down the middle, an' twine the ladies'  
chain,

Varn Andrews pen the fillies in big T. Diamond's  
train.

All pull yer freight tergether, neow swallow fork  
an' change,

^ Big Boston ' lead the trail herd, through little  
Pitchfork's range.

"5

The Cowboys^ Christmas Ball

Purr round yer gentle pussies, neow rope 'eml

Balance all ! "

Huh ! hit wuz gittin' active — " The Cowboys'

Christmas Ball 1 "

The dust riz fast an' furious, we all just galloped

round,

Till the scenery got so giddy, that Z Bar Dick was

downed.

We buckled to our partners, an' told 'em to hold on.

Then shook our hoofs like lightning until the early

dawn.

Don't tell me 'bout cotillions, or germans. No sir-

'ee!

That whirl at Anson City just takes the cake with

me.

I'm sick of lazy shufflin's, of them I've had my fill.

Give me a frontier breakdown, backed up by Windy

Bill.

McAllister ain't nowhere 1 when Windy leads the

show,

I've seen 'em both in harness, an' so I sorter know —

Oh, Bill, I sha'n't forget yer, and I'll oftentimes

recall,

That lively-gaited sworray — \*\* The Cowboys'

Christmas Ball."

Larry Chittenden in " Ranch Verses.^'

## A DANCE AT THE RANCH

FROM every point they gaily come, the broncho's  
unshod feet

Pat at the green sod of the range with quick, emphatic beat;

The tresses of the buxom girls as banners stream  
behind — ^

Like silken, castigating whips cut at the sweeping  
wind.

The dashing cowboys, brown of face, sit in their saddle  
throne

And sing the wild songs of the range in free, uncultured  
tones.

Or ride beside the pretty girls, like gallant cavaliers.

And pour the usual fairy tales into their listening ears.

Within the "best room" of the ranch the jolly  
gathered throng

Buzz like a hive of human bees and lade the air with  
song;

The maidens tap their sweetest smiles and give their  
tongues full rein



In efforts to entrap the boys in admiration's chain.

The fiddler tunes the strings with pick of thumb and  
scrape of bow,

Finds one string keyed a note too high, another one  
too low;

117

A Dance at the Ranch

Then rosins up the tight-drawn hairs, the young

folks In a fret

Until their ears are greeted with the warning words,

" All set 1

S'lute yer pardners 1 Let 'er go 1

Balance all an' do-ce-do !

Swing yer girls an' run away 1

Right an' left an' gents sashay!

Gents to right an' swing or cheat I

On to next gal an' repeat I

Balance next an' don't be shy I

Swing yer pard an' swing 'er high I

Bunch the gals an' drde round !

Whack yer feet until they bound I>

Form a basket! Break away!

Swing an' kiss an' all git gay!

Al'man left an' balance all!

Lift yer hoofs an' let 'em fall I  
Swing yer op'sites ! Swing agin I  
Kiss the sagehens if you kin! "  
An' thus the merry dance went on till morning's

struggling light

In lengthening streaks of grey breaks down the

barriers of the night.

And broncs are mounted in the glow of early morn-  
ing skies

By weary-limbed young revelers with drooping,

sleepy eyes.

The cowboys to the ranges speed to " work " the

lowing herds,

n8

A Dance at the Ranch

The girls within their chambers hide their sleep like

weary birds,

And for a week the young folks talk pf what a jolly

spree

They had that night at Jackson's ranch down on the

Owyhee.

Anonymous.

119

#### AT A COWBOY DANCE

GIT yo' little sagehens ready;  
Trot 'em out upon the floor —  
Line up there, you critters ! Steady !

Lively, now ! One couple more.  
Shorty, shed that ol' sombrero;  
Broncho, douse that cigaret;  
Stop yer cussin', Casimero,

'Fore the ladies. Now, all set:

S'lute yer ladies, all together;

Ladies opposite the same;  
Hit the lumber with yer leather;

Balance all an' swing yer dame;  
Bunch the heifers in the middle ;

Circle stags an' do-ce-do;  
Keep a-steppin' to the fiddle;

Swing 'em 'round an' off you go.

First four forward. Back to places.

Second foUer. Shuffle back —

Now you've got it down to cases —

Swing 'em till their trotters crack.

Gents all right a-heel an' toein';

Swing 'em — kiss 'em if yo' kin —

On to next an' keep a-goin'

Till yo' hit yer pards agin.

120

At a Cowboy Dance

Gents to center. Ladies 'round 'em;

Form a basket; balance all;

Swing yer sweets to where yo' found 'em;

All p'mnade around the hall.

Balance to yer pards an' trot 'em

'Round the circle double quick;

Grab an' squeeze 'em while you've got 'em —

Hold 'em to it if they kick.

Ladies, left hand to yer sonnies ;

Alaman; grand right an' left;

Balance all an' swing yer honies —

Pick 'em up an' feel their heft.

All p'mnade like skeery cattle;

Balance all an' swing yer sweets ;

Shake yer spurs an' make 'em rattle —

Keno! Promenade to seats.

James Barton Adams.

III

#### THE COWBOYS' BALL

YIP! Yip! Yip! Yip! tunin' up the fiddle;

You an' take yo'r pardner there, standin' by  
the wall!

Say \*' How!\*' make a bow, and sashay down the

middle;

Shake yo'r leg lively at the Cowboys' Ball.

Big feet, little feet, all the feet a-clickin' ;

Everybody happy an' the goose a-hangin' high;  
Lope, trot, hit the spot, like a colt a-kickin' ;  
Keep a-stompin' leather while you got one eye.

Yah! Hool Larry I would you watch his wings

a-floppin'  
Jumpin' like a chicken that's a-lookin' for its head;  
Hi I Yip I Never slip, and never think of stoppin',  
Just keep yo'r feet a-movin' till we all drop dead 1

High heels, low heels, moccasins and slippers ;  
Real old rally round the dipper and the keg I  
Uncle Ed's gettin' red — had too many dippers ;  
Better get him hobbled or he'll break his leg!

Yip! Yip! Yip! Yip! tunin' up the fiddle;

Pass him up another for his arm is gettin' slow.

122

The Cowboys\* Ball

Bow down! right in town — and sashay down the

middle;

Got to keep a-movin' for to see the show!

Yes, mam I Warm, mam ? Want to rest a minute ?

Like to get a breath of air lookin' at the stars ?

All right 1 Fine night — Dance ? There's nothin'

m It I

That's my pony there, peekin' through the bars.

Bronc, mam? No, mam! Gentle as a kitten!

Here, boy! Shake a hand! Now, mam, you can

see;

Night's cool. What a fool to dance, instead of

sittin'

Like a gent and lady, same as you and me.

Yip! Yip! Yip! Yip! tunin' up the fiddle;

Well, them as likes the exercise sure can have it all I

Right wing, lady swings, and sashay down the middle . . .

But this beats dancin' at the Cowboys' Ball.

Henry Herbert Knibbs.

"3

PART III

COWBOY TYPES

DOWN where the Rio Grande ripples  
When therm's water in its bed;  
Where no man is ever drunken — -.  
All prefer mescal instead;  
Where no lie is ever uttered —  
There being nothin' one can trade;  
Where no marriage vows are broken  
'Cause the same are never made.

#### THE COWBOY

HE wears a big hat and big spurs and all that,  
And leggins of fancy fringed leather;  
He takes pride in his boots and the pistol he shoots,  
And he's happy in all kinds of weather ;  
He's fond of his horse, it's a broncho, of course,  
For oh, he can ride like the devil;  
He is old for his years and he always appears  
Like a fellow who's lived on the level;  
He can sing, he can cook, yet his eyes have the look  
Of a man that to fear is a stranger;  
Yes, his cool, quiet nerve will always subserve  
For his wild life of duty and danger.  
He gets little to eat, and he guys tenderfeet,  
And for fashion, oh well ! he's not in it ;  
He can rope a gay steer when he gets on its ear  
At the rate of two-forty a minute ;  
His saddle's the best in the wild, woolly West,  
Sometimes it will cost sixty dollars;



Ah, he knows all the tricks when he brands mavericks.

But his knowledge is not got from your scholars ;  
He is loyal as steel, but demands a square deal,  
And he hates and despises a coward;  
Yet the cowboy, you'll find, to women is kind  
Though he'll fight till by death overpowered.

127

The Cowboy

Hence I say unto you, — give the cowboy his due

And be kind, my friends, to his folly;

For he's generous and brave though he may not

behave

Like your dudes, who are so melancholy.

Anonymous.

128

BAR-Z ON A SUNDAY NIGHT

WE ain't no saints on the Bar-Z ranch,  
'Tis said — an' we know who 'tis —  
" Th' devil's laid hold on us, tooth an' branch,  
An' uses us in his biz."  
Still, we ain't so bad but we might be wuss,  
An' you'd sure admit that's right,  
If you happened — an' unbeknown to us —  
Around, of a Sunday night.

Th' week-day manners is stowed away,

Th' jokes an' the card games halts.

When Dick's ol' fiddle begins to play

A toon — an' it ain't no waltz.

It digs fer th' things that are out o' sight,

It delves through th' toughest crust,

It grips th' heart-strings, an' holds 'em tight,

Till we've got ter sing — er bust I

With pipin' treble the kid starts in.

An' Hell ! how that kid kin sing I

" Yield not to temptation, fer yieldin' is sin,"

He leads, an' the rafters ring;

\*\* Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue,"

We shouts it with force an' vim;

Bar-Z on a Sunday Night

" Look ever to Jesus, he'll carry you through,"-  
That's puttin' it up to Him I

We ain't no saints on the ol' Bar-Z,

But many a time an' oft

When ol' fiddle's a-pleadin', " Abide with me,"

Our hearts gets kinder soft.

An' we makes some promises there an' then

Which we keeps — till we goes to bed, —

That's the most could be ast o' a passel o' men

What ain't no saints, as I said.

Percival Combes.

A PATTERRING rush like the rattle of hall  
When the storm king's wild coursers are out  
on the trail,  
A long roll of hoofs, — and the earth is a drum!  
The centaurs I See I Over the prairies they come !

A rollicking, clattering, battering beat;

A rhythmical thunder of galloping feet ;

A swift-swirling dust-cloud — a mad hurricane

Of swarthy, grim faces and tossing, black mane ;

Hurrah ! in the face of the steeds of the sun  
The gauntlet is flung and the race is begun !

/ . C. Davis.

131

f

THE HABIT

I'VE beat my way wherever any winds have blown ;

I've bummed along from Portland down to San  
Antone ;  
From Sandy Hook to Frisco, over gulch and hill, —  
For once you git the habit, why, you can't keep still.

I settled down quite frequent, and I says, says I,

" I'll never wander further till I come to die."

But the \nnd it sorter chuckles, '\* Why, o' course

you will."

An' sure enough I does it 'cause I can't keep still.

I've seen a lot o' places where I'd like to stay.  
But I gets a-feelin' restless an' I'm on my way.  
I was never meant for settin' on my own door sill.  
An', once you git the habit, why, you can't keep still.

I've been in rich men's houses an' I've been in jail,  
But when it's time for leavin' I jes hits the trail.  
I'm a human bird of passage and the song I trill  
Is, " Once you git the habit, why, you can't keep  
still."

132

The Habit

\

The sun is sorter coxin', an' the road is clear,  
An' the wind is singin' ballads that I got to hear.  
It ain't no use to argue when you feel the thrill ;  
For, once you git the habit, why, you can't keep still.

Berton Braley.

133

#### A RANGER

HE never made parade of tooth or claw;  
He was plain as us that nursed the bawlin'  
herds.  
Though he had a rather meanin'-lookin' jaw,  
He was shy of exercisin' it with words.  
As a circus-ridin' preacher of the law,  
All his preachin' was the sort that hit the nail;  
He was just a common ranger, just a ridin' pilgrim

stranger.

And he labored with the sinners of the trail.

Once a Yaqui knifed a woman, jealous mad,  
Then hit southward with the old, old killer's plan,  
And nobody missed the woman very bad.  
While they'd just a little rather missed the man.

But the ranger crossed his trail and sniffed it glad,  
And then loped away to bring him back again.  
For he stood for peace and order on the lonely,

sunny border

And his business was to hunt for sinful men I

So the trail it led him southward all the day.  
Through the shinin' country of the thorn and snake,  
Where the heat had drove the lizards from their  
play

134

A Ranger

To the shade of rock and bush and yucca stake.  
And the mountains heaved and rippled far away  
And the desert broiled as on the devil's prong,  
But he didn't mind the devil if his head kept clear

and level

And the hoofs beat out their clear and steady song.

Came the yellow west, and on a far off rise  
Something black crawled up and dropped beyond

the rim.

And he reached his rifle out and rubbed his eyes  
While he cussed the southern hills for growin' dim.  
Down a hazy 'royo came the coyote cries,

Like they laughed at him because he'd lost his mark,  
And the smile that brands a fighter pulled his mouth

a little tighter

As he set his spurs and rode on through the dark.

Came the moonlight on a trail that wriggled higher  
Through the mountains that look into Mexico,  
And the shadows strung his nerves like banjo wire  
And the miles and minutes dragged unearthly slow.  
Then a black mesquite spit out a thread of fire  
And the canyon walls flung thunder back again.  
And he caught himself and fumbled at his rifle while

he grumbled

That his bridle arm had weight enough for ten.

Though his rifle pointed wavy-like and slack  
And he grabbed for leather at his hawse's shy,

135

A Ranger

Yet he sent a soft-nosed exhortation back  
That convinced the sinner — just above the eye.  
So the sinner sprawled among the shadows black  
While the ranger drifted north beneath the moon,  
Wabblin' crazy in his saddle, workin' hard to stay

a-straddle



While the hoofs beat out a slow and sorry tune.

When the sheriff got up early out of bed,  
How he stared and vowed his soul a total loss.  
As he saw the droopy thing all blotched with red  
That came ridin' in aboard a tremblin' hawse.  
But " I got 'im " was the most the ranger said  
And you couldn't hire him, now, to tell the tale ;  
He was just a quiet ranger, just a ridin' pilgrim

stranger

And he labored with the sinners of the trail.

Charles Badger Clark, Jr.

136

#### THE INSULT

I'VE swum the Colorado where she runs close  
down to hell ;  
I've braced the faro layouts in Cheyenne ;  
I've fought for muddy water with a bunch of howlin'

swine

An' swallowed hot tamales and cayenne ;

I've rode a pitchin' broncho till the sky was under-  
neath ;

I've tackled every desert in the land ;  
I've sampled XX whiskey till I couldn't hardly see  
An' dallied with the quicksands of the Grande ;  
  
I've argued with the marshals of a half a dozen  
  
burgs ;  
I've been dragged free and fancy by a cow ;  
I've had three years' campaignin' with the fightin',  
  
bitin' Ninth,  
An' I never lost my temper till right now.

I've had the yellor fever and been shot plum full of  
  
holes ;  
I've grabbed an army mule plum by the tail ;  
But I've never been so snortin', really highfalutin'

mad  
As when you up and hands me ginger ale.

Anonymous.

137

" THE ROAD TO RUIN " ^

I WENT into the grog-shop, Tom, and stood be-  
side the bar.  
And drank a glass of lemonade and smoked a bad

seegar.

The same old kegs and jugs was thar, the same we

used to know

When we was on the round-up, Tom, some twenty  
years ago.

The bar-tender is not the same. The one who used

to sell

Corroded tangle-foot to us, is rotting now in hell.

This one has got a plate-glass front, he combs his

hair quite low.

He looks just like the one we knew some twenty years

ago.

Old soak came up and asked for booze and had the

same old grin

While others burned their living forms and wet

their coats with gin.

Outside the doorway women stood, their faces

seamed with woe

And wept just like they used to weep some twenty

years ago.

^A famous saloon in West Texas carried this unusual sign.

n

The Road to Ruin "

I asked about our old-time friends, those cheery,  
sporty men;

And some was in the poor-house, Tom, and some  
was in the pen.

You know the one you liked the best ? — the hang-  
man laid him low,—

Oh, few are left that used to booze some twenty  
years ago.

You recollect our favorite, whom pride claimed for

her own, —

He used to say that he could booze or leave the

stuff alone.

He perished for the James Fitz James, out in the

rain and snow, —

Yes, few survive who used to booze some twenty

years ago.

I visited the old church yard and there I saw the

graves

Of those who used to drown their woes in old fermented ways.

I saw the graves of women thar, ljrning where the daisies grow.

Who wept and died of broken hearts some twenty years ago.

Anonymous.

139

#### THE OUTLAW

WHEN my loop takes hold on a two-year-old,

By the feet or the neck or the horn,

He kin plunge and fight till his eyes go white.

But I'll throw him as sure as you're born.

Though the taut rope sing like a banjo string

And the latigoes creak and strain.

Yet I've got no fear of an outlaw steer

And I'll tumble him on the plain.

For a man is a man and a steer is a beast,

And the man is the boss of the herd;

And each of the bunch, from the biggest to least,

Must come down when he says the word.

When my leg swings 'cross on an outlaw hawse

And my spurs clinch into his hide.

He kin r'ar and pitch over hill and ditch.

But wherever he goes I'll ride.

Let 'im spin and flop like a crazy top.

Or flit like a wind-whipped smoke.

But he'll know the feel of my rowelled heel

Till he's happy to own he's broke.

For a man is a man and a hawse is a brute,

And the hawse may be prince of his clan,

## The Outlaw

But he'll bow to the bit and the steel-shod boot  
And own that his boss is the man.

When the devil at rest underneath my vest

Gets up and begins to paw,  
And my hot tongue strains at its bridle-reins,

Then I tackle the real outlaw;  
When I get plumb riled and my sense goes wild,

And my temper has fractious growed.  
If he'll hump his neck just a triflin' speck,

Then it's dollars to dimes I'm throwed.

For a man is a man, but he's partly a beast —  
He kin brag till he makes you deaf,

But the one, lone brute, from the West to the  
East,  
That he kaint quite break, is himse'f.

Charles B. Clark, Jr.

## THE DESERT

^TT^WAS the lean coyote told me, baring his  
X slavish soul,

As I counted the ribs of my dead cayuse and  
cursed at the desert sky,  
The tale of the Upland Rider's fate while I dug in  
the water hole  
For a drop, a taste of the bitter seep; but the  
water hole was dry 1

\*\* He came," said the lean coyote, " and he cursed  
as his pony fell;  
And he counted his pony's ribs aloud; yea, even  
as you have done.  
He raved as he ripped at the clay-red sand like an  
imp from the pit of hell.  
Shriveled with thirst for a thousand years and  
craving a drop — just one."

" His name ? " I asked, and he told me, yawning to  
hide a grin:  
" His name is writ on the prison roll and many  
a place beside ;  
Last, he scribbled it on the sand with a finger seared  
and thin,



And I watched his face as he spelled it out —  
laughed as I laughed, and died.

" And thus," said the lean coyote, " his need is the  
hungry's feast,

And mine." I fumbled and pulled my gun —  
emptied it wild and fast.

But one of the crazy shots went home and silenced  
the waiting beast;

There lay the shape of the Liar, dead 1 'Twas I  
that should laugh the last.

Laugh? Nay, now I would write my name as the  
Upland Rider wrote ;

Write? What need, for before my eyes in a  
wide and wavering line

I saw the trace of a written word and letter by letter  
float

Into a mist as the world grew dark; and I knew  
that the name was mine.

Dreams and visions within the dream; turmoil and  
fire and pain;

Hands that proffered a brimming cup — empty,  
ere I could take;

Then the burst of a thunder-head — rain I It was  
rude, fierce rain!

Blindly down to the hole I crept, shivering,  
drenched, awake I

## The Desert

Dawn — and the edge of the red-rimmed sun stat-  
tering golden flame,  
As stumbling down to the water hole came the  
horse that I thought was dead;  
But never a sign of the other beast nor a trace' of a  
rider's name ;  
Just a rain-washed track and an empty gun —  
and the old home trail ahead.

Henry Herbert Knibbs.

## WHISKEY BILL,— A FRAGMENT

A -DOWN the road and gun in hand  
Comes Whiskey Bill, mad Whiskey Bill; ^  
A-lookin' for some place to land  
Comes Whiskey Bill.  
An' everybody'd like to be  
Ten miles away behind a tree  
When on his joyous, aching spree  
Starts Whiskey Bill.

The times have changed since you made love,

O Whiskey Bill, O Whiskey BiUl

The happy sun grinned up above

At Whiskey Bill.

And down the middle of the street

The sheriff comes on toe and feet

A-wishin' for one fretful peek

At Whiskey Bill.

The cows go grazing o'er the lea, —

Poor Whiskey Bill! Poor Whiskey Bill!

An' aching thoughts pour in on me

Of Whiskey Bill.

The sheriff up and found his stride;

Bill's soul went shootin' down the slide, —

How are things on the Great Divide,

O Whiskey Bill?

Anonymous.

## DENVER JIM

\*\*OIA Y, fellers, that ornery thief must be nigh us,  
O For I jist saw him across this way to the right ;  
Ah, there he is now right under that burr-oak  
As fearless and cool as if waitin' all night.  
Well, come on, but jist get every shooter all ready  
Fur him, if he's spilin' to give us a fight;  
The birds in the grove will sing chants to our picnic  
An' that limb hangin' over him stands about right.

" Say, stranger, good mornin'. Why, dog blast my  
lasso, boys.

If it ain't Denver Jim that's corralled here at last.

Right aside for the jilly. Well, Jim, we are searchin'

All night for a couple about of your cast.

An' seein' yer enter this openin' so charmin'

We thought perhaps yer might give us the trail.

Haven't seen anything that would answer descrip-  
tion?

What a nerve that chap has, but it will not avail.

" Want to trade bosses fur the one I am stridin' 1  
Will you give me five hundred betwixt fur the boot?  
Say, Jim, that air gold is the strongest temptation  
An' many a man would say take it and scoot.

Denver Jim

But we don^t belong to that denomination ;  
You have got to the end of your rope, Denver Jim.  
In ten minutes more we'll be crossin' the prairie,  
An' you will be hangin' there right from that limb.

" Have you got any speakin' why the sentence ain't

proper?

Here, take you a drink from the old whiskey flask.  
Ar' not dry? Well, I am, an' will drink ter yer,

pard.

An' wish that this court will not bungle this task.  
There, the old lasso circles your neck like a fixture ;  
Here, boys, take the line an' wait fer the word;  
I am sorry, old boy, that your claim has gone under ;  
Fer yer don't meet yer fate like the low, common

herd.

"What's that? So yer want me to answer a letter, —

Well, give it to me till I make it all right,  
A moment or two will be only good manners,  
The judicious acts of this court will be white.

\* Long Point, Arkansas, the thirteenth of August,

My dearest son James, somewhere out in the West,  
For long, weary months I've been waiting for tid-  
ings  
Since your last loving letter came eastward to bless.

" ' God bless you, my son, for thus sending that  
money,

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Denver Jim

Remembering your mother when sorely in need.  
May the angels from heaven now guard you from

danger  
And happiness follow your generous deed.  
How I long so to see you come into the doorway,  
As you used to, of old, when weary, to rest.  
May the days be but few when again I can greet you,  
My comfort and staff, is your mother's request'

" Say, pard, here's your letter. I'm not good at

writin',  
I think you'd do better to answer them lines;  
An' fer fear I might want it I'll take off that lasso,  
An' the boss you kin leave when you git to the pines.  
An' Jim, when yer see yer old mother jist tell her  
That a wee bit o' writin' kinder hastened the day  
When her boy could come eastward to stay with her

always.

Come boys, up and mount and to Denver away."

O'er the prairies the sun tipped the trees with its

splendor.

The dew on the grass flashed the diamonds so

bright.

As the tenderest memories came like a blessing

From the days of sweet childhood on pinions of

light.

Not a word more was spoken as they parted that

morning,

148

Denver Jim

Yet the trail of a tear marked each cheek as they

turned ;

For higher than law is the love of a mother, —

It reversed the decision, — the court was adjourned.

Sherman D. Richardson.

THE VIGILANTES

WE are the whirlwinds that winnow the

West —

We scatter the wicked like straw 1

We are the Nemeses, never at rest —

We are Justice, and Right, and the Law 1

Moon on the snow and a blood-chilling blast,

Sharp-throbbing hoofs like the heart-beat of fear,

A halt, a swift parley, a pause — then at last

A stiff, swinging figure cut darkly and sheer

Against the blue steel of the sky; ghastly white

Every on-looking face. Men, our duty was clear;

Yet ah 1 what a soul to send forth to the night 1

Ours is a service brute-hateful and grim;

Little we love the wild task that we seek;

Are they dainty to deal with — the fear-rigid limb,

The curse and the struggle, the blasphemous shriek?

Nay, but men must endure while their bodies have

breath ;

God made us strong to avenge Him the weak —

To dispense his sure wages of sin — which is death.

We stand for our duty : while wrong works its will.

Our search shall be stern and our course shall be



wide;

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### The Vigilantes

Retribution shall prove that the just liveth still,  
And its horrors and dangers our hearts can abide,  
That safety and honor may tread in our path;  
The vengeance of Heaven shall speed at our side.  
As we follow unwearied our mission of wrath.

We are the whirlwinds that winnow the West —  
We scatter the wicked like straw!  
We are the Nemeses, never at rest —  
We are Justice, and Right, and the Law!

Margaret Ashmun.

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### THE BANDIT'S GRAVE

'Ty^ID lava rock and glaring sand,  
XVA 'Neath the desert's brassy skies,  
Bound in the silent chains of death  
A border bandit lies.

The poppy waves her golden glow  
Above the lowly mound;  
The cactus stands with lances drawn, —  
A martial guard around.

His dreams are free from guile or greed.

Or foray's wild alarms.

No fears creep in to break his rest

In the desert's scorching arms.

He sleeps in peace beside the trail.

Where the twilight shadows play,

Though they watch each night for his return

A thousand miles away.

From the mesquite groves a night bird calls

When the western skies grow red;

The sand storm sings his deadly song

Above the sleeper's head.

His steed has wandered to the hills

And helpless are his hands,

152

The Bandit's Grave

Yet peons curse his memory  
Across the shifting sands.

The desert cricket tunes his pipes

When the half-grown moon shines dim;

The sage thrush trills her evening song —

But what are they to him?

A rude-built cross beside the trail

That follows to the west

Casts its long-drawn, ghastly shadow

Across the sleeper's breast.

A lone coyote comes by night

And sits beside his bed,

Sobbing the midnight hours away

With gaunt, up-lifted head.

The lizard trails his aimless way

Across the lonely mound.

When the star-guards of the desert

Their pickets post around.

The winter snows will heap their drifts

Among the leafless sage;

The pallid hosts of the blizzard

Will lift their voice in rage;

The gentle rains of early spring

Will woo the flowers to bloom.

And scatter their fleeting incense

O'er the border bandit's tomb.

Charles Pitt.

153

i

#### THE OLD MACKENZIE TRAIL

SEE, stretching yonder o'er that low divide

Which parts the falling rain, — the eastern slope

Sends down its waters to the southern sea

Through Double Mountain's winding length of

stream ;

The western side spreads out into a plain.

Which sinks away o'er tawny, rolling leagues

At last into the rushing Rio Grande, —

See, faintly showing on that distant ridge.

The deep-cut pathways through the shelving crest,

Sage-matted now and rimmed with chaparral.

The dim reminders of the olden times,

The life of stir, of blood, of Indian raid,

The hunt of buffalo and antelope ;

The camp, the wagon train, the sea of steers;

The cowboy's lonely vigil through the night;

The stampede and the wild ride through the storm;

The call of California's golden flood;

The impulse of the Saxon's \*\* Westward Ho "

Which set our fathers' faces from the east.

To spread resistless o'er the barren wastes,

To people all the regions 'neath the sun —

Those vikings of the old Mackenzie Trail.

It winds — this old forgotten cattle trail —

Through valleys still and silent even now,

154

The Old Mackenzie Trail

«

Save when the yellow-breasted desert lark

Cries shrill and lonely from a dead mesquite,

In quivering notes set in a minor key;

The endless round of sunny days, of starry nights,

The desert's blank immutability.

The coyote's howl is heard at dark from some

Low-lying hill; companioned by the loafer wolf

They yelp in concert to the far off stars.

Or gnaw the bleached bones in savage rage

That lie unburied by the grass-grown paths.

The prairie dogs play sentinel by day

And backward slips the badger to his den ;

The whirl, the fatal strike of rattlesnake,

A staring buzzard floating in the blue.

And, now and then, the curlew's eerie call, —

Lost, always lost, and seeking evermore.

All else is mute and dormant; vacantly

The sun looks down, the days run idly on,

The breezes whirl the dust, which eddying falls

Smothering the records of the westward caravans.

Where silent heaps of wreck and nameless graves

Make milestones for the old Mackenzie Trail.

Across the Brazos, Colorado, through

Concho's broad, fair valley, sweeping on

By Abilene it climbs upon the plains.

The Llano Estacado (beyond lie wastes

Of alkali and hunger gaunt and death), —

And here is lost in shifting rifts of sand.

Anon it lingers by a hidden spring

155

The Old Mackenzie Trail

That bubbles joy into the wilderness ;

Its pathway trenched that distant mountain side,

Now grown to gulches through torrential rain.

De Vaca gathered pinons by the way,

Long ere the furrows grew on yonder hill,  
  
Cut by the creaking prairie-schooner wheels ;  
  
La Salle, the gentle Frenchman, crossed this course,  
  
And went to death and to a nameless grave.  
  
For ages and for ages through the past  
  
Comanches and Apaches from the north  
  
Came sweeping southward, searching for the sun,  
  
And charged in mimic combat on the sea.  
  
The scions of Montezuma's low-browed race  
  
Perhaps have seen that knotted, thorn-clad tree;  
  
Or sucked the cactus apples growing there.  
  
All these have passed, and passed the immigrants,  
  
Who bore the westward fever in their brain.  
  
The Norseman tang for roving in their veins ;  
  
Who loved the plains as sailors love the sea,  
  
Braved danger, death, and found a resting place  
  
While traveling on the old Mackenzie Trail.



Brave old Mackenzie long has laid him down  
To rest beyond the trail that bears his name;  
A granite mountain makes his monument;  
The northers, moaning o'er the low divide.  
Go gently past his long deserted camps.  
No more his rangers guard the wild frontier,  
No more he leads them in the border fight.  
No more the mavericks, winding stream of horns

156

#### The Old Mackenzie Trail

To Kansas bound ; the dust, the cowboy songs  
And cries, the pistol's sharp report, — the free,  
Wild days in Texas by the Rio Grande.  
And some men say when dusky night shuts down.  
Dark, cloudy nights without a kindly star,  
One sees dim horsemen skimming o'er the plain  
Hard by Mackenzie's trail; and keener ears  
Have heard from deep within the bordering hills  
The tramp of ghostly hoofs, faint cattle lows,  
The rumble of a moving wagon train,  
Sometimes far echoes of a frontier song;  
Then sounds grow fainter, shadows troop away, —  
On westward, westward, as they in olden time  
Went ranging o'er the old Mackenzie Trail.

John A. Lomax.

THE SHEEP.HERDER ^

ALL day across the sagebrush flat,  
XX Beneath the sun of June,  
My sheep they loaf and feed and bleat

Their never changin' tune.  
And then, at night time, when they lay

As quiet as a stone,  
I hear the gray wolf far away,

" Alo-one 1 " he says, " Alo-onc 1 "

A-a I ma-a I ba-a I eh-eh-eh I

The tune the woollies sing;  
It's rasped my ears, it seems, for years,

Though really just since Spring;  
And nothin', far as I can see

Around the circle's sweep.  
But sky and plain, my dreams and me

And them infernal sheep.

I've got one book — it's poetry —

A bunch of pretty wrongs

An Eastern lunger gave to me;

He said 'twas \*\* shepherd songs."

But, though that poet sure is deep

And has sweet things to say,

^Only such cowboys as are in desperate need of employment  
ever become sheep-herders.

158

The Sheep'Herder

He never seen a herd of sheep

Or smelt them, anyway.

A-al ma-al ba-al eh-eh-ehl

My woollies greasy gray,

An awful change has hit the range

Since that old poet's day.

For you're just silly, on'ry brutes

And I look like distress,

And my pipe ain't the kind that toots

And there's no "shepherdess."

Yet 'way down home in Kansas State,

Bliss Township, Section Five,

There's one that's promised me to wait,

The sweetest girl alive;

That's why I salt my wages down

And mend my clothes with strings,

While others blow their pay in town

For booze and other things.

A-al ma-a! ba-al eh-eh-eh!

My Minnie, don't be sad;

Next year we'll lease that splendid piece

That corners on your dad.

We'll drive to "literary," dear.

The way we used to do

And turn my lonely workin' here

To happiness for you.

159

The Sheep-Herder

Suppose, down near that rattlers\* den,

While I sit here and dream,  
Fd spy a bunch of ugly men

And hear a woman scream.  
Suppose rd let my rifle shout

And drop the men in rows,  
And then the woman should turn out —

My Minnie 1 — just suppose.

A-a I ma-a I ba-a I eh-eh-eh I

The tune would then be gay;  
There is, I mind, a parson kind

Just forty miles away.  
Why, Eden would come back again,

With sage and sheep corrals.  
And I could swing a singin\* pen

To write her " pastorals."

I pack a rifle on my arm

And jump at flies that buzz;  
There's nothin' here to do me harm;

I sometimes wish there was.

If through that brush above the pool

A red should creep — and creep —

Wah 1 cut down on 'im 1 — Stop, you fool 1

That's nothin' but a sheep.

A-al ma-a I ba-a I — Helll

Oh, sky and plain and bluff I

Unless my mail comes up the trail

i6o

The Sheep-Herder

Fm locoed, sure enough.

What's that? — a dust-whiff near the butte

Right where my last trail ran,

A movin' speck, a — wagon I Hoot I

Thank God! here comes a man.

Charles Badger Clark, Jr.

i6i

Y

#### A COWBOY AT THE CARNIVAL

ES, o' cose it's interestin' to a feller from the  
range,  
Mighty queerish, too, I tell you, — sich a racket fer

a change;  
From a life among the cattle, from a wool shirt

and the chaps  
To the biled shirt o' the city and the other tony

traps.  
Never seed sich herds o' people throwed together,

every brand  
O' humanity, I reckon, in this big mountain land  
Rounded up right here in Denver, runnin' on new

sort o' feed.  
Actin' restless an' oneasy, like they threatened to

stampede.

Mighty curious to a rider comin' from the range,

he feels  
What you'd call a lost sensation from sombrero clar

to heels ;

Like a critter stray that drifted in a windstorm from

its range

To another run o' grazin' where the brands it sees

are strange.

162

A Cowboy at the Carnival

Then I sec a city herder, a policeman, don\*t you

know,

Sort o' think he's got men spotted an' is 'bout to make

a throw

Fcr to catch me an' corral me fer a stray till he can

talk

On the wire an' tell the owner fer to come an' get

his stock.

Yes, it's mighty strange an' funny fer a cowboy, as

you say,

Fer to hit a camp like this one, so unanimously gay;

But I want to tell you, pardner, that a rider sich as me



Isn't built fer feedin' on sich crazy jamboree.  
Every bone I got's a-achin', an' my feet as sore as if  
I had hit a bed o' cactus, an' my hinges is as stiff  
From a-hittin' these hot pavements as a feller's jints

kin git, —  
'Taint like holdin' down a broncho on the range, a

little bit.

I'm hankerin', I tell you, fer to hit the trail an' run

Like a crazy, locoed yearlin' from this big cloud-  
burst o' fun

Back toward the cattle ranches, where a feller's  
breath comes free

An' he wears the clothes that fits him, 'stead o' this  
slick toggery.

Where his home is in the saddle, an' the heavens is  
his roof,

163

A Cowboy at the Carnival

An' his ever'day companions wears the hide an'

cloven hoof,

Where the heller of the cattle is the only sound he

hears,

An' he never thinks o' nothin' but his grub an' boss

an' steers.

Anonymous.

164

#### THE OLD COWMAN

I RODE across a valley range

I hadn't seen for years.

The trail was all so spoilt and strange

It nearly fetched the tears.

I had to let ten fences down, —

(The fussy lanes ran wrong)

And each new line would make me frown

And hum a mournin' song.

Oh, it's squeak! squeak! squeak!

Hear 'em stretchin' of the wire!

The nester brand is on the land;

I reckon I'll retire.

While progress toots her brassy horn

And makes her motor buzz,

I thank the Lord I wasn't born  
No later than I wuz !

'Twas good to live when all the sod,  
Without no fence nor fuss.  
Belonged in partnership to God,  
The Government and us.  
With skyline bounds from east to west  
And room to go and come,  
I loved my fellowman the best  
When he was scattered some.

165

The Old Cowman

Oh, it's squeak! squeak! squeak!

Close and closer cramps the wire !

There's hardly play to back away

And call a man a liar.

Their house has locks on every door;

Their land is in a crate.

There ain't the plains of God no more,

They're only real estate.

There's land where yet no ditchers dig

Nor cranks experiment;

It's only lovely, free and big

And isn't worth a cent.

I pray that them who come to spoil

May wait till I am dead

Before they foul that blessed soil

With fence and cabbage head.

Yet it's squeak! squeak! squeak!

Far and farther crawls the wire !

To crowd and pinch another inch

Is all their heart's desire.

The world is over-stocked with men,

And some will see the day

When each must keep his little pen,

But I'll be far away.

When my old soul hunts range and rest  
Beyond the last divide,  
Just plant me in some stretch of West

i66

#### The Old Cowman

That's sunny, lone and wide.

Let cattle rub my tombstone down

And coyotes mourn their kin,

Let hawses paw and tramp the moun', —

But don't you fence it in I

Oh, it's squeak! squeak! squeak!

And they pen the land with wire.

They figure fence and copper cents

Where we laughed round the fire.

Job cussed his birthday, night and morn

In his old land of Uz,

But I'm just glad I wasn't born

No later than I wuz!

Charles Badger Clark, Jr,

167

#### THE GILA MONSTER ROUTE

THE lingering sunset across the plain  
Kissed the rear-end door of an east-bound  
train,  
And shone on a passing track close by  
Where a ding-bat sat on a rotting tie.

He was ditched by a shock and a cruel fate.  
The con high-balled, and the manifest freight  
Pulled out on the stem behind the mail,  
And she hit the ball on a sanded rail.

As she pulled away in the falling light  
He could see the gleam of her red tail-light.  
Then the moon arose and the stars came out —  
He was ditched on the Gila Monster Route.

Nothing in sight but sand and space;  
No chance for a gink to feed his face;  
Not even a shack to beg for a lump.  
Or a hen-house to frisk for a single gump.

He gazed far out on the solitude;  
He drooped his head and began to brood;  
He thought of the time he lost his mate  
In a hostile burg on the Nickle Plate.

i68

#### The Gila Monster Route

They Kad mooched the stem and threw their feet,  
And speared four-bits on which to eat;  
But deprived themselves of daily bread  
And sluffcd their coin for " dago red."

Down by the track in the jungle's glade,  
In the cool green grass, in the tules' shade,  
They shed their coats and ditched their shoes  
And tanked up full of that colored booze.

Then they took a flop with their skins plumb full,  
And they did not hear the harnessed bull.  
Till he shook them out of their boozy nap,  
With a husky voice and a loaded sap.

They were charged with " vag," for they had no

kale,  
And the judge said, " Sixty days in jail."  
But the John had a bindle, — a worker's plea, —  
So they gave him a floater and set him free.

They had turned him up, but ditched his mate,  
So he grabbed the guts of an east-bound freight.  
He flung his form on a rusty rod.  
Till he heard the shack say, \*\* Hit the sod I "

The John piled off, he was in the ditch.  
With two switch lamps and a rusty switch, —  
A poor, old, seedy, half-starved bo  
On a hostile pike, without a show.

169

#### The Gila Monster Route

From away off somewhere in the dark  
  
Came the sharp, short notes of a coyote's bark.  
  
The bo looked round and quickly rose  
  
And shook the dust from his threadbare clothes.  
  
Off in the west through the moonlit night  
He saw the gleam of a big head-light —  
An east-bound stock train hummed the rail;  
She was due at the switch to clear the mail.

As she drew up close, the head-end shack  
Threw the switch to the passenger track,  
The stock rolled in and off the main,



And the line was clear for the west-bound train.

When she hove in sight far up the track,

She was workin' steam, with her brake shoes slack.

She hollered once at the whistle post,

Then she flitted by like a frightened ghost.

He could hear the roar of the big six-wheel,

And her driver's pound on the polished steel.

And the screech of her flanges on the rail

As she beat it west o'er the desert trail.

The John got busy and took the risk,

He climbed aboard and began to frisk.

He reached up high and began to feel

For the end-door pin — then he cracked the seal.

170

The Gila Monster Route

'Twas a double-decked stock-car, filled with sheep,

Old John crawled in and went to sleep.

She whistled twice and high-balled out, —

They were off, down the Gila Monster Route.

L. F. Post and Glenn Norton.

171

#### THE CALL OF THE PLAINS

HO I wind of the far, far prairies I  
Free as the waves of the sea  
Your voice is sweet as in alien street  
The cry of a friend to me I  
You bring me the breath of the prairies,  
Known in the days that are sped,  
The wild geese's cry and the blue, blue sky  
And the sailing clouds o'er head!

My eyes are weary with longing

For a sight of the sage grass gray.

For the dazzling light of a noontide bright

And the joy of the open day I

Oh, to hear once more the clanking

Of the noisy cowboy's spur,

And the south wind's kiss like a mild caress

Making the grasses stir.

I dream of the wide, wide prairies  
Touched with their glistening sheen,  
The coyotes' cry and the wind-swept sky  
And the waving billows of green I  
And oh, for a night in the open  
Where no sound discordant mars.  
And the marvelous glow, when the sun is low.  
And the silence under the stars I

172

The Call of the Plains

Ho, wind from the western prairies I

Ho, voice from a far domain!

I feel in your breath what I feel till death,

The call of the plains again !

The call of the Spirit of Freedom

To the spirit of freedom in me;

My heart leaps high with a jubilant cry

And I answer in ecstasy !

Ethel MacDiarmid.

173

WHERE THE GRIZZLY DWELLS ^

I ADMIRE the artificial art of the East;  
But I love more the inimitable art of the West,  
Where nature's handiwork lies in virginal beauty.  
Amidst the hum of city life  
I saunter back to dreams of home.  
Astride the back of my trusty steed  
I wander away, losing myself  
In the foothills of the Rockies.

Away from human habitations,  
Up the rugged slopes,  
Through the timbered stretches,  
I hear the frightful cry of wolves  
And see a bear sneaking up behind.

Many nights ago.

While herding a bunch of cattle

During the round-up season,

I lay upon the grass

Looking at the mated stars;

I wondered if a cowboy

Could go to the Unknown Place,

^ Fox is a halfbreed Indian who sent me a lot of verse. Although he had never heard of Walt Whitman, these stanzas suggest that poet The spelling and punctuation are mine.

174

Where the Grizzly Dwells

The Happy Hunting Ground,  
When this short life is over.

But, here or there, I shall always live

In the land of mountain air

Where the grizzly dwells

And sage brush grows;

Where mountain trout are not a few;

In the land of the Bitterroot, —

The Indian land, — Land of the Golden West.

James Fox,

175

#### A COWBOY TOAST

HERE'S to the passing cowboy, the plowman's  
pioneer;

His home, the boundless mesa, he of any man the  
peer;

Around his wide sombrero was stretched the rat-  
tler's hide.

His bridle sporting conchos, his lasso at his side.

All day he roamed the prairies, at night he, with  
the stars.

Kept vigil o'er thousands held by neither posts nor  
bars ;

With never a diversion in all the lonesome land.

But cattle, cattle, cattle, and sun and sage and  
sand.

Sometimes the hoot-owl hailed him, when scudding

through the flat;

And prairie dogs would sauce him, as at their doors

they sat;

The rattler hissed its warning when near its haunts

he trod

Some Texas steer pursuing o'er the pathless waste

of sod.

With lasso, quirt, and 'colter the cowboy knew his

skill;

176

#### A Cowboy Toast

They pass with him to history and naught their place

can fill;

While he, bold broncho rider, ne'er conned a lesson

page,—

But cattle, cattle, cattle, and sun and sand and sage.

And oh 1 the long night watches, with terror in the

skies I

When lightning played and mocked him till blinded

were his eyes;

When raged the storm around him, and fear was

in his heart

Lest panic-stricken leaders might make the whole

herd start.

That meant a death for many, perhaps a wild stampede,

When none could stem the fury of the cattle in the

lead;

Ah, then life seemed so little and death so very

near, —

With cattle, cattle, cattle, and darkness everywhere.

Then quaff with me a bumper of water, clear and

pure.

To the memory of the cowboy whose fame must e'er

endure

From the Llano Estacado to Dakota's distant sands.

Where were herded countless thousands in the days

of fenceless lands.



## A Cowboy Toast

Let us rear for him an altar in the Temple of the

Brave,

And weave of Texas grasses a garland for his grave ;

And offer him a guerdon for the work that he has

done

With cattle, cattle, cattle, and sage and sand and

sun.

James Barton Adams.

178

RIDIN' UP THE ROCKY TRAIL FROM

TOWN

"Billy Leamont rode out of the town —

Close at his shoulder rode Jack Lorell —

Over the leagues of the prairies brown,

Into the hills where the sun goes down —

Billy Leamont and Jack Lorell/

Billy Leamont looked down the dell —

Dead below him lay Jack Lorell —

With his gun at his forehead he fired and fell,  
Then rode they two through the streets of hell —

Billy Leamont and Jack Lorell/ "

The Ballad of Billy Leamont.^

WE'RE the children of the open and we hate  
the haunts o' men,  
But we had to come to town to get the mail.  
And we're ridin' home at daybreak — 'cause the air

is cooler then —  
All 'cept one of us that stopped behind in jail.  
Shorty's nose won't bear paradin', Bill's off eye is

darkly fadin',  
All our toilets show a touch of disarray,  
For we found that City life is a constant round of

strife  
And we aint the breed for shyin' from a fray.

^This fragment is not included in Mr. Clark's poem.

## Ridin' Up the Rocky Trail from Town

Chant your warhoops, pardners, dear, while the east

turns pale with fear

And the chaparral is tremblin\* all arouW

For w^re wicked to the marrer; we're a midnight

dream of terror

fWhen we're ridin' up the rocky trail from town!

We acquired our hasty temper from our friend, the

centipede.

From the rattlesnake we learnt to guard our rights.

We have gathered fightin' pointers from the famous

bronco steed

And the bobcat teached us reppertee that bites.

So when some high<oUared herrin' jeered the garb

that I was wearin'

'Twasn't long till we had got where talkin' ends,

, And he et his ill-bred chat, with a sauce of derby hat.

While my merry pardners entertained his friends.

Sing 'er out, my buckeroosi Let the desert hear

the news.

Tell the stars the way we rubbed the haughty down.

We're the fiercest wolves a-prowlin' and it's just our

night for howlin'

fWhen we're ridin' up the rocky trail from town.

Since the days that Lot and Abram split the Jordan

range in halves.

Just to fix it so their punchers wouldn't fight,

i8o

Ridin' Up the Rocky Trail from Town

Since old Jacob skinned his dad-in-law of six years'

crop of calves

And then hit the trail for Canaan in the night,

There has been a taste for battle 'mong the men

that follow cattle

And a love of doin' things that's wild and strange,

And the warmth of Laban's words when he missed

his speckled herds

Still is useful in the language of the range.

Sing 'er out, my bold coyotes! leather fists and

leather throats,

For we wear the brand of Ishm^el like a crown.

fVe're the sons o\* desolation, we're the outlaws of

creation —

Ee-Yow! a-ridin' up the rocky trail from town!

i8i

#### THE DISAPPOINTED TENDERFOOT

HE reached the West in a palace car where the  
writers tell us the cowboys are,  
With the redskin bold and the centipede and the

rattlesnake and the loco weed.

He looked around for the Buckskin Joes and the

things he'd seen in the Wild West shows —

The cowgirls gay and the bronchos wild and the

' painted face of the Injun child.

He listened close for the fierce war-whoop, and his

pent-up spirits began to droop,

And he wondered then if the hills and nooks held  
none of the sights of the story books.

He'd hoped he would see the marshal pot some  
bold bad man with a pistol shot.

And entered a low saloon by chance, where the ten-  
derfoot is supposed to dance

While the cowboy shoots at his bootheels there and  
the smoke of powder begrims the air.

But all was quiet as if he'd strayed to that silent  
spot where the dead are laid.

Not even a faro game was seen, and none flaunted  
the long, long green.

'Twas a blow for him who had come in quest of a  
touch of the real wild woolly West.

182

#### The Disappointed Tenderfoot

He vainly sought for a bad cayuse and the swirl and  
  
swish of the flying noose,  
And the cowboy's yell as he roped a steer, but nothing  
  
of this fell on his ear.

Not even a wide-brimmed hat he spied, but derbies

flourished on every side,  
And the spurs and the "chaps" and the flannel

shirts, the high-heeled boots and the guns and

the quirts,

The cowboy saddles and silver bits and fancy bridles

and swell outfits

He'd read about in the novels grim, were not on

hand for the likes of him.

He peered about for a stagecoach old, and a miner-  
man with a bag of gold.

And a burro train with its pack-loads which he'd  
read they tie with the diamond hitch.

The rattler's whirl and the coyote's wail ne'er  
sounded out as he hit the trail;

And no one knew of a branding bee or a steer  
roundup that he longed to see.

But the oldest settler named Six-Gun Sim rolled a  
cigarette and remarked to him:

" The West hez gone to the East, my son, and it's  
only in tents sich things is done."

E. A. Brinninstool.

## SCIENCE

WHEN I ride into the mountains on my little  
broncho bird,  
Whar my ears are never pelted with the bawlin' o'

the herd,  
An' a sort o' dreamy quiet hangs upon the western

air.  
An' thar ain't no animation to be noticed anywhere;  
Then I so.rt o' feel oneasy, git a notion in my head  
I'm the only livin' mortal — everybody else is

dead —  
An' I feel a queer sensation, rather skeery like, an'

odd,  
. When thar ain't nobody near me, 'ceptin' God.

Every rabbit that I startle from its shaded restin'  
place.

Seems a furry shaft o' silence shootin' into noise-  
less space,

An' a rattlesnake a crawlin' through the rocks so  
old an' gray

Helps along the ghostly feelin' in a rather startlin'  
way.



Every breeze that dares to whisper does it with a  
bated breath,

184

#### A Cowboy Alone With His Conscience

Every bush stands grim an' silent in a sort o' livin'

death —

Tell you what, a feller's feelin's give him many an

icy prod,

When thar ain't nobody near him, 'ceptin' God.

Somehow alius git to thinkin' o' the error o' my

ways.

An' my memory goes wingin' back to childhood's

happy days.

When a mother, now a restin' in the grave so dark

an' deep.

Used to listen while I'd whisper, " Now I lay me

down to sleep."

Then a sort o' guilty feelin' gits a surgin' in my

breast.

An' I wonder how I'll stack up at the final judg-

ment test.

Conscience alius welts it to me with a mighty cuttin'

rod.

When thar ain't nobody near me, 'ceptin' God.

Take the very meanest sinner that the nation ever  
saw.

One that don't respect relipon more'n he respects the  
law.

One that never docs an action that's commendable  
or good,

An' immerse him fur a season out in Nature's soli-  
tude,

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A Cowboy Alone With His Conscience

An' the cog-wheels o' his conscience '11 be rattled

out o' gear,

More'n if he 'tended preachin' every Sunday in the

year,

Fur his sins 'ill come a ridin' through his cranium  
rough shod.

When thar ain't nobody near him, 'ceptin' God.

James Barton Adams.

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JUST A-RIDIN' 1

OH, for me a horse and saddle  
Every day without a change;  
With the desert sun a-blazin'  
On a hundred miles o' range,

Just a-ridin', just a-ridin',  
Desert ripplin' in the sun,  
Mountains blue along the skylinc,-  
I don't envy anyone.

When my feet are in the stirrups

And my horse is on the bust;

When his hoofs are flashin' lightnin'

From a golden cloud o' dust;

And the bawlin' of the cattle

Is a-comin' down the wind, —

Oh, a finer life than ridin'

Would be mighty hard to find,

Just a-ridin', just a-ridin',

Splittin' long cracks in the air,

Stirrin' up a baby cyclone,

Rootin' up the prickly pear.

I don't need no art exhibits

When the sunset does his best,

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Just A'Ridin'I

Paintin' everlastin' glories

On the mountains of the west.

And your operas look foolish

When the night bird starts his tune

And the desert's silver-mounted

By the kisses of the moon,

Just a-ridin\ just a-ridin\

I don't envy kings nor czars

When the coyotes down the valley

Are a-singin' to the stars.

When my earthly trail is ended

And my final bacon curled,

And the last great round up's finished

At the Home Ranch of the world,  
I don't want no harps or haloes.  
Robes or other dress-up things, —  
Let me ride the starry ranges  
On a pinto horse with wings.

Just a-ridin', just a-ridin',  
Splittin' chunks o' wintry air.  
With your feet froze to your stirrups  
And a snowdrift in your hair.  
{As sent by Elwood Adams, a Colorado  
cozvpuncher.) See '^ Sun and Saddle  
Leather," by Charles Badger Clark, Jr.

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#### THE END OF THE TRAIL

SOH, Bossie, sohl  
The water's handy heah,  
The grass is plenty neah,  
An' all the stars a-sparkle  
Bekaze we drive no mo' —  
We drive no mo'.

The long trail ends today, —  
The long trail ends today,  
The punchers go to play  
And all you weary cattle

May sleep in peace for sure, —  
May sleep in peace for sure, —  
Sleep, sleep for sure.

The moon can't bite you heah.  
Nor punchers fright you heah.  
An' you-all will be beef befo'  
We need you any mo', —  
We need you any mo' !

From Pocock's " Curley.

THE END

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