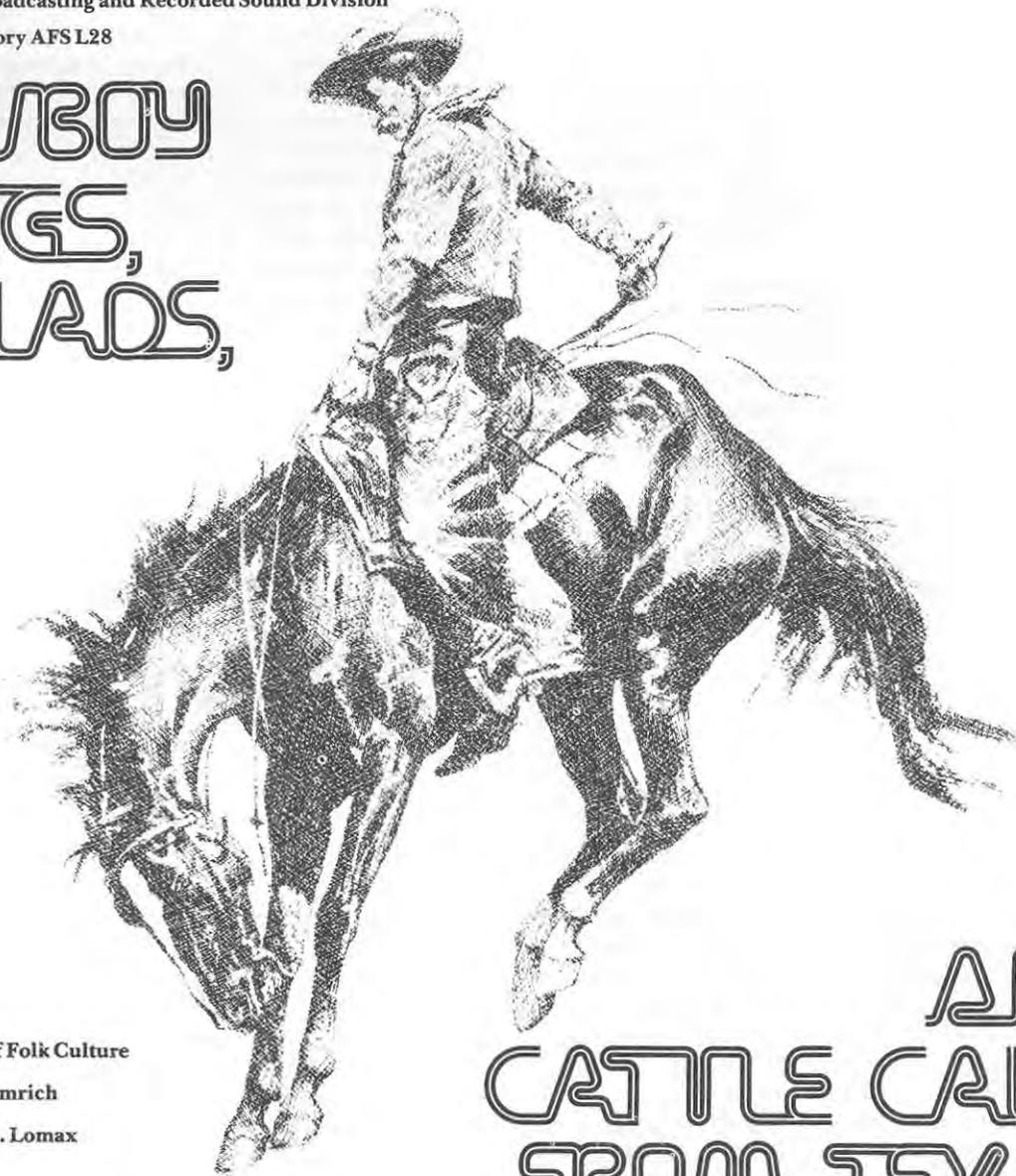


FOLK MUSIC OF THE UNITED STATES

Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division

Recording Laboratory AFS L28

COUWBOY
SONGS,
BALLADS,



From the Archive of Folk Culture

Edited by Duncan Emrich

Collected by John A. Lomax

AND
CATTLE CALLS
FROM TEXAS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON

PREFACE

With the single exception of "Colley's Run-I-O," a traditional Maine lumberjack song included here for comparison with its western descendant, "The Buffalo Skinners," all of the material on this record comes from Texas and is sung by Texans. All of it relates to the life of the cowboy on the ranches and ranges, and all of the songs are sung by men who have, at one time or another, been closely associated with the cattle industry, usually in a direct capacity as working hand or boss. With the exception of two songs, all were recorded on portable disc equipment in Texas by John A. Lomax of Dallas, and Mr. Lomax himself sings "The Buffalo Skinners." It is most fitting that his voice appears on this record, for he was—apart from early association with the then Archive of American Folk Song—the first and greatest collector of the cowboy songs of the West. It was he who first "discovered" most of the songs on this record, who rescued "The Buffalo Skinners" from oblivion, and who tracked down the men who composed—or made up in the folk manner—"Goodbye, Old Paint" and "The Night Herding Song." Folklorists are indebted to him for his untiring work as collector and for the many books and articles that brought the results of his findings

to the attention of the scholarly world and the general public.

The voices of the men who sing these songs are untrained musically. There is nothing here of the drugstore cowboy or of the sweet and polished renditions heard in the jukebox. These men sat on their horses more easily than any chair on a concert stage. As a result, the listener hears—perhaps for the first time—the songs as they were actually sung in the cow country of the West. The difference between the real folk song and the more popularized versions to which he has been accustomed may come as a distinct shock. It will be no shock, however, to those men whose roots lie in the cattle industry, who know the western land from Texas to Montana, and who have participated in roundups, trail herding, campfire relaxation, night herding, and bunkhouse entertainments of their own making. For these men—the old-timers and their immediate descendants—these songs are as true as the smell of saddle leather and the dust of the plains. Fortunately they have been preserved for us, so that we may, vicariously at least, experience something of the real ways of the early West.

General References for Study

In addition to the specific references which may be given with individual songs, the following books and journals may be consulted by the interested student. The *Publications of the Texas Folklore Society* (Austin, Tex.) has appeared as an annual volume since 1916 and contains much material relating to cowboy and frontier songs, as well as to the general life of the cowboy. Raymon R. Adams's *Western Words, A Dictionary of the Range, Cow Camp and Trail* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1944; 182 pp.) is the standard and highly readable reference work on cowboy vocabulary, most useful to the student who wishes to under-

stand the full texts of the songs. John Lomax's *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910; 191 pp.) appeared in its first edition without music but was later reissued (1938; 431 pp.) with music. It is the standard work. Additional bibliographical material will be found in Vance Randolph, *Ozark Folksongs* (Columbia, Mo.: Missouri State Historical Society, 1946-1950; 4 vols.) which lists, in volume I, various special studies on cowboy songs; and in Charles Haywood, *A Bibliography of North American Folksong* (New York: Greenberg Publishers, 1951.)

A1 & A2—COLLEY'S RUN-I-O and THE BUFFALO SKINNERS

The two following songs are considered as a unit because the juxtaposition of them illustrates, rather uniquely, a very nice point in the transmission of folk song from one area of our country to another. The first song, "Colley's Run-I-O," is not, of course, a cowboy song, but a lumberjack or woodsman's song from Pennsylvania. Behind the Pennsylvania version, in turn, lie the originals of Maine and England. There is a Michigan variant to color the picture as well. A brief history of the song follows.

An original English love song, "Caledonia," appeared in print somewhere before 1800 in *The Caledonia Garland* (Boswell Chapbooks, XXVIII, 11, Harvard University Library), and this song was used as the base upon which was built the English sea song, "Canada I O," which was printed in the *Forget-me-not Songster*, (New York: Nafis and Cornish, 1847, pp. 114-15) and elsewhere. The small pocket songsters of the period had wide circulation, and it is probable that a copy of the *Forget-me-not* fell into the hands of Ephraim Braley, a lumberjack who lived in Judson, Maine. He was known as "a good singer with a comic and highly satiric turn, who made up many songs about local people and events." In 1853 Braley and other local men hired out to go work in the woods in the region beyond Three Rivers, Province of Quebec, and following his return after the winter, Braley composed the song on his experiences, also calling it "Canada I O." This song circulated only in oral tradition among the lumberjacks. Maine lumberjacks, however, moved out of Maine following the lumbering trade and certain of them took the song with them to both Pennsylvania and Michigan, localizing the song in each state with "Colley's Run-I-O" and "Michigan-I-O," respectively. The song next turned up in Texas as "The Buffalo Skinners" in 1873 or immediately thereafter, since within the song itself we have "It happened in Jacksboro in the year of seventy-three." We have, then, positive evidence of its creation in 1854 as a lumberjack song in Maine and equally positive evidence that in 1873-74 it appeared as a "cowboy" song in Texas—in other words a twenty-year span for its transference to the West and its alteration. It is possible that the song

moved to Texas via Michigan; it did not move from Pennsylvania, at least from our version given here, since the Pennsylvania song also bears the date 1873. It is quite probable, however, that it went directly from Maine to Texas, carried there by a lumberjack turned cowboy, who altered the song to suit the changed locale and circumstances. We have, then, a song which jumped directly from Maine to three widely scattered points—Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Texas—and was not slowly diffused. [The material for this portion of the note has been drawn from the excellent article by Fannie H. Eckstorm, "Canaday I O," in *Bulletin of the Folk-song Society of the Northeast*, Cambridge, Mass., 1933, no. 6, p. 10.]

The opening and closing stanzas of the *Forget-me-not* love song of the sea and the Maine folk original are given here for comparison with the songs on this record. The *Forget-me-not* text, it will be noted, bears virtually no relation to the very marked folk improvement upon it.

Forget-me-not:

Stanza 1

There was a gallant lady, all in her tender youth,
She dearly lov'd a sailor, in truth she lov'd him
much,
And for to get to sea with him the way she did
not know,
She long'd to see that pretty place called
Canada I O.

Stanza 6

Come all you pretty fair maids wherever you
may be,
You must follow your true lovers when they are
gone to sea,
And if the mate proves false to you, the captain
he'll prove true,
You see the honour I have gained by wearing
of the blue.

Ephraim Braley's Maine folk original:

Stanza 1

Come all ye jolly lumbermen, and listen to my
song,

But do not get discouraged, the length it is not
long,
Concerning of some lumbermen, who did agree
to go
To spend one pleasant winter up in Canada I O.

Stanza 11

But now our lumbering is over and we are
returning home,
To greet our wives and sweethearts and never
more to roam,
To greet our friends and neighbors; we'll tell
them not to go
To that foresaken G— D— place called Canada
I O.

A1—COLLEY'S RUN-I-O (I) (Lumberjack
Song). Sung, with guitar, by L. Parker
Temple at Washington, D.C., 1946. Re-
corded by Rae Korson.

Come all you jolly lumbermen, and listen to my
song,
I'll tell you all my story, and I won't detain you
long,
Concerning some husky lumbermen who once
agreed to go
And spend a winter recently on Colley's Run-i-o.

We landed in Lock Haven in the year of
'seventy-three,
A minister of the gospel one evening said to me:
"Are you the party of lumbermen that once
agreed to go
And spend a winter pleasantly on Colley's
Run-i-o?"

"Oh, yes, we'll go to Colley's Run, to that we
will agree,
Provided you pay good wages, our passage to
and fro,
Then we'll agree to accompany you to Colley's
Run-i-o,
Then we'll agree to accompany you to Colley's
Run-i-o."

But now the spring has come again, and the
icebound streams are free,
We'll float our logs to Williamsport, have friends
we'll haste to see;

Our sweethearts they will welcome us, and bid
others not to go
To that God-forsaken gehooley of a place
called Colley's Run-i-o!

A2—THE BUFFALO SKINNERS (II). Sung
and recorded by John A. Lomax of Dallas,
Texas, at Washington, D.C., 1941.

"The Buffalo Skinners," the Texas variant of
the Maine lumberjack song, was first discovered
by John A. Lomax and was published by him in
the first edition of *Cowboy Songs* (Macmillan,
1910). It was one of Mr. Lomax's favorite
songs, and one which he sang very frequently
for his own pleasure. It is most appropriate that
he himself sings it here.

It happened in Jacksboro in the year of
'seventy-three,
A man by the name of Crego came stepping up
to me,
Saying, "How do you do, young fellow, and
how would you like to go
And spend one summer pleasantly on the range
of the buffalo?"

It's me being out of employment, boys, this to
Crego he [I] did say,
"This going out on the buffalo range depends
upon the pay;
But if you will pay good wages, give trans-
portation too,
I think that I will go with you to the range of
the buffalo."

The season being over, old Crego he did say,
The crowd had been extravagant, was in debt
to him that day.
We coaxed him and we begged him, and still it
was no go:
We left old Crego's bones to bleach on the
range of the buffalo.

Oh, it's now we've crossed Pease River, boys,
and homeward we are bound,
No more in that hell-fired country shall ever
we be found,
Go home to our wives and sweethearts, tell
others not to go,
For God's forsaken the buffalo range and the
damned old buffalo.

A3—GOODBYE, OLD PAINT (I). Sung, with fiddle, by Jess Morris at Dalhart, Texas, 1942. Recorded by John A. Lomax.

In "Goodbye, Old Paint," we come, through Jess Morris of Dalhart, Texas, which is up in the Panhandle, as close to the precise origin of the song as is now possible. Morris claims to be the composer of the song, and in terms of the folk tradition by which a song is recreated as it passes from one person to another, he quite rightly is, and no one would deny him the very pleasant honor which is his. However, Morris himself, being an honest and forthright Texan, has written us at the Library of Congress detailing the full history of the song as he knew it. I quote verbatim from his letters, including also some family background, since it seems of interest:

"My father, E. J. Morris, landed in Williamson County, Texas, in 1850, with a wagon train of immigrants from Springfield, Missouri. After locating a ranch on Donahugh creek, my father did farm and ranching, and for a while, around 1854 and on until the 60's, freighted from Houston, Texas, and the seaports, to Belton, Texas, and among other things, he was a circuit rider Baptist Minister. My father was in the Civil War in Texas and Louisiana, but really did not want to fight against the Government.

"After the Civil War in 1865, father hired an ex-slave by the name of Charley Willis—colored—who was about 17 yrs. old, to break horses for him. Charley was born in Milam County, Texas, an adjoining County. Possibly, during the work for my father on up until around 1891, when my father moved to Amarillo, Texas, Charley had gone up the trail to Wyoming—the neighborhood of Cheyenne. D. H. and J. W. Snyder of Georgetown, Texas, Williamson Co., were famous cattlemen & trail drivers. Snyder brothers, having driven their first herd to Wyoming in 1867, but later in 1871, the Snyders drove ten (10) herds, consisting of about 1,500 head in each herd, and it was [with] one of those herds that Charley took the trail, and on one of those trips, Charley learned to sing Ol' Paint.

"I was born June 12th, 1878, in Williamson County, Texas, just one mile and a half from the line of Bell County, where Bartlett, Texas, was at the time, and is now. In 1884, and 1885,

Charley was working for my father in Bell County, Texas, as father sold his interests in Williamson County and moved over to Bell County, on Indian Creek, buying a black land farm in Bell County. Charley played a jews-harp, and taught me to play it. It was on this jews-harp that I learned to play Ol' Paint, at the age of 7 (seven). In later years I learned to play the fiddle, and played Ol' Paint on the fiddle, in my own special arrangement—tuning the fiddle accordingly."

As a footnote, Morris in one letter adds: "Many publishers swiped my song and had it published, and many old maverick 'Paints' were running wild and unbranded."

Morris's brand on "Ol' Paint" is clear and unmistakable: he has the oldest known version; he traces it to what may be its point of origin, Charley; he made his own "special arrangement" for the fiddle; and he has, in the folk tradition, his own song.

Farewell, fair ladies, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne,
Farewell, fair ladies, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne,
Goodbye, my little Dony, my pony won't stand.
Old Paint, old Paint, I'm a-leaving
Cheyenne,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm leaving Cheyenne,
Old Paint's a good pony, and she paces
when she can.

In the middle of the ocean there grows a green
tree,
But I'll never prove false to the girl that loves
me.

Old Paint, old Paint, I'm a-leaving
Cheyenne,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm leaving Cheyenne,
Old Paint's a good pony, and she paces
when she can.

Oh, we spread down the blanket on the green
grassy ground,
And the horses and cattle were a-grazing all
'round.

Oh, the last time I saw her, it was late in the fall,
She was riding old Paint, and a-leading old Ball.

Old Paint had a colt down on the Rio Grande,
And the colt couldn't pace, and they named it
Cheyenne.

For my feet's in my stirrups, and my bridle's in
my hand,
Goodbye, my little Dony, my pony won't stand,
Old Paint . . .

Farewell, fair ladies, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne,
Farewell, fair ladies, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne,
Goodbye, my little Dony, my pony won't stand.

A4—GOODBYE, OLD PAINT (II). Sung by
Sloan Matthews of Alpine, Texas, at Pecos,
Texas, 1942. Recorded by John A. Lomax.

My foot in the stirrup, my pony won't stand,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne,
I'm a-leaving Cheyenne, I'm off for Montan',
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne.

I'm a-riding old Paint, I'm a-leading old Fan,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne,
With my feet in the stirrups, my bridle in my
hand,
Goodbye, old Paint, I'm a-leaving Cheyenne.

Old Paint's a good pony, he paces when he can,
Goodbye, little Angie, I'm off for Cheyenne.
Oh, hitch up your horses, and feed them some
hay,
And set yourself by me as long as you'll stay.

My horses ain't hungry, they can't eat your hay,
My wagon is loaded and rolling away,
I'm a-riding old Paint, I'm a-leading old Dan,
I'm a-going to Montan' to throw the hoolihan.*

* "Hoolihan" is a form of bulldogging where the
snout of the calf or steer is seized and pressed,
forcing the animal's head to the ground and thus
throwing it, rather than twisting its head in the
common practice of rodeos today.

A5—THE TEXAS RANGERS. Sung by Sloan
Matthews of Alpine, Texas, at Pecos, Texas,
1942. Recorded by John A. Lomax.

During or immediately after the Civil War,
the ballad of "The Texas Rangers" first made
its appearance, presumably written by a fifteen-
year-old soldier of the Arizona Brigade. It was
published in F. D. Allan's *Lone Star Ballads*
(Galveston, 1874, p. 38). The following stanza
from that ballad is clearly related to the second
stanza as sung by Mr. Matthews:

I saw the Yankees coming, I heard them give a
yell,
My feelings at that moment no tongue can ever
tell;
I saw their glittering lances; they seemed to
pierce me through,
We fought full nine hours before the strife was
o'er.

In 1874 the Texas Rangers turned their atten-
tion to hostile Indians, and the present variant
of the song first appeared at that time. Mr. Mat-
thews's version is a brief three stanzas, but,
nevertheless, succinctly gives the basic story.

Come all you Texas Rangers, wherever you may
be,
I'll tell you of some trouble that happened unto
me;
At the age of seventeen, I joined the jolly band,
We marched from San Antonio unto the Rio
Grande.

Our captain he informed us, perhaps he thought
it right,
Before you reach your station, my boys, you'll
have to fight;
I saw those Indians coming, I heard the savage
yell,
I thought to my sorrow, this is my time to die.

We fought them bravely all day long, and when
the battle was o'er,
Such a like of dead and wounded I'd never
seen before;
[I thought] of my old mother, in Texas she
did say,
"You know that they are strangers, you'd
better keep away."
I thought she was old and childish, the best
she did not know,
My mind was bent on ranging, and I was
bound to go.

L: "How old are you, Mr. Matthews?"

M: "Sixty-two."

L: "Sixty-two. How long've you been in the
West?"

M: "Sixty-two years. Bad luck to be born any-
where only in Texas. Not bad luck, but mis-
fortune. Some have to be born somewhere
else."

A6—(I) CATTLE CALLS: STARTING. Spoken and illustrated with cattle calls by Sloan Matthews of Alpine, Texas, at Pecos, Texas, 1942. Interviewed and recorded by John A. Lomax.

As a matter of simplifying certain aspects of their work with cattle, the cowboys developed individual yells and hollers, some of which, as used by Sloan Matthews, are given here. A broad collection of these calls would point up the fact that no two of them are alike and that each cowboy improvised his own, suiting them to his own mood of the moment and to the relative orneriness of the cattle. The calls in themselves differ; the tone of the night herding call is clearly distinguished from others by its soothing quality, and it can properly be called a working lullaby of the plains. Texas cattlemen will recognize the authenticity of Mr. Matthews's shouts and hollers and will also appreciate the difficulties under which he labored to reproduce them. "If I had a horse. . . ."

L: "I'm particularly anxious to make records of all the calls that the cowboys used to control the cattle, to turn them, to quiet them, and maybe to stop them. Now go along and tell me about the different calls, and when you . . . and illustrate your points. In handling the cattle, how'd you use the voice to control them."

M: "Illustrate each one?"

L: "Yes, well just say each"

M: "Uh huh. . . . To do that a fellow'd have to imagine that he could take it early in the morning when he'd first start on the drive, and then till he gets them throwed together. . . . and then the roundup, during the roundup, working the roundup, he wouldn't use any calls. Probably they'd cut herd, and he'd start somewheres with them, and then he'd use them. And then night herding would be separate, or penning would be separate."

L: "Allright, well go ahead and give the early morning calls . . . I mean shouts that he'd use. Starting the herd out."

M: "Well, say we're rounding up, not starting herd. It's already loose."

L: "Allright, allright."

M: "Making the roundup. Well, for instance, you want to save a little ride out to one side, you'd start those cattle by hollering."

L: "Holler."

M: "You'd try it anyway."

L: "Holler. Turn yourself loose."

M: "For that purpose?"

L: "Yes."

M: "If I had a horse, I could."

L: "Well, do the best you can. Of course, I"

M: "For instance, if they's out there a hundred yards, and you wanted to save that ride. [Calls]"

L: "Well, now what would that make the cattle *do*?"

M: "They'd start."

(II) Cattle Calls: Driving

L: "Mr. Matthews, I want to talk a little more about the cattle calls, how they were used, and then give illustrations of them."

M: "Well, I'll first say that I'll imagine I'm out on a drive, which is a roundup, and cattle to one side anywhere from a hundred yards off to a half a mile, and I want to start them. The hollering I would do would be [calls]. Something like that, especially if there was a rimrock behind them. The echo would be double on that if you had to start them down a canyon or up. Then, under other conditions, for instance after they had traveled a mile or two, and slowed down down a canyon, and you was wanting to push them up a little, it was [calls]. That generally had effect on them."

(III) Cattle Calls: Night Herding

L: "Now tell me about the night calls."

M: "Well, if a herd was drifting or milling, I would say most men would say [calls]. Something similar to that. And then most

men would say [calls]. Kind of a half way of singing and half way of hollering . . . and anything that would console . . . that would sound easy enough to make . . . to not scare the cattle and at the same time attract their attention, and let the cattle know that you're there, and let the cattle know that it is not something else, that it's a man on a horse. And then the other call, in case of stampede, which I've often heard from boys and some men is what I would say taking hysterics. And it—I couldn't imitate it at all. It's just a scream from the excitement, and not knowing what they're . . . I doubt if they know where they're at, or what they're doing, or why they're hollering, or know that they did holler."

A7—THE COWBOY'S LIFE IS A VERY DREARY LIFE. Sung by Sloan Matthews of Alpine, Texas, at Pecos, Texas, 1942. Recorded by John A. Lomax.

This song appears, without note of provenience, in Lomax's *Cowboy Songs* and in Larkin's *Singing Cowboy*. Both variants are considerably longer than Mr. Matthews's. The inexplicable "Chinaman's charms" is probably the result of purely oral transmission. In Lomax, the line in question appears as "You are speaking of your farms, you are speaking of your charms"; and in Larkin, the line is "Talk about your farms and your city charms." The song itself is a realistic account of the cowboy's life and offsets somewhat the glamorous picture which has been built up in recent years. For purposes of comparison, see John A. Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York, 1938, p. 15) and Margaret Larkin, *Singing Cowboy* (New York, 1931, p. 39).

Chorus:

You can talk about your farms and your
Chinaman's charms,
You talk about your silver and your gold,
But the cowboy's life is a very dreary life,
It's a-riding through the heat and the cold.

Early every morning, you'll hear the boss say,
"Get up, boys, it's the breaking of day;"
It's now for to rise with your little sleepy eyes,
And the bright dreamy night's passed away.

When springtime comes, double hardships
begun,
The rain it's so fresh and so cold,
We almost freeze from the water on our clothes,
And the cattle you can scarcely hold.

Cowboys, take my advice, setting out for to
roam,
But you better stay at home with your kind and
loving little wife.

B1—THE DYING RANGER. Sung by Johnny Prude at Fort Davis, Texas, 1942. Recorded by John A. Lomax.

Vance Randolph indicates that this song is a Western adaptation of an older song known as "The Dying Soldier." In the earlier song, the soldier is a New Englander rather than a Texan, and his enemies are "traitors," presumably meaning Confederates. In the various other Texas versions of the song, the enemies are clearly stated as being Indians, whereas in the song given here they remain "traitors." In other versions also, the Texan is sometimes a cowboy and not a Ranger. This would indicate that the present variant is descended in a fairly close line from the original, and that the enemies are probably meant to be Union soldiers. Just as the North used Southern songs, so also the South (Texas here) adopted Northern ones.

The sun was sinking in the west, and it fell with
a lingering ray
Through the branches of the forest where a
wounded Ranger lay;
'Neath the shade of a palmetto and the sunset
silver sky,
Far away from his home in Texas they laid
him down to die.

A group had gathered 'round him, his com-
rades in the fight,
A tear rolled down each manly cheek as he bid
a last good night.
One tired [tried] and true companion was
kneeling by his side,
To stop the life-blood flowing, but, alas, in vain
he tried.

When to stop the life-blood flowing he found
'twas all in vain,
The tears rolled down each man's cheek like
light showers of rain.

Up spoke the noble Ranger, "Boys, weep no more for me,
I'm crossing the deep blue waters to a country that is free.

"Draw closer to me, comrades, and listen to what I say,
I am going to tell a story while my spirit hastens away:
Way back in northwest Texas, that good old Lone Star State,
There is one that for my coming with a weary heart will wait.

"A fair young girl, my sister, my only joy, my pride,
She was my friend from boyhood, I have no one left beside.
I have loved her as a brother, and with a father's care,
I have strove for [from] grief and sorrow her gentle heart to spare.

"My mother she lies sleeping beneath the churchyard sod.
And many a day has passed away since her spirit fled to God.
My father he lies sleeping beneath the deep blue sea,
I have no other kindred, there are none but Nell and me.

"But our country was invaded and they called for volunteers;
She threw her arms around me, then burst into tears,
Saying: 'Go, my darling brother, drive those traitors from our shore;
My heart may need your presence, but our country needs you more.'

"It's true I love my country, for her I gave my all,
If it hadn't been for my sister, I would be content to fall.
But I'm dying, comrades, dying, she will never see me more,
But in vain she'll wait for my coming by a little cabin door.

"So, comrades, gather closer and listen to my dying prayer,
Who will be to her as a brother, and shield her with a brother's care."

Up spoke the noble Rangers, they answered one and all,
"We'll be to your sister as a brother to [till] the last one of us do fall."

One glad smile of pleasure o'er the Ranger's face was spread,
One dark, convulsive shadow, and the Ranger boy was dead.

Far from his darling sister we laid him down to rest,
With a saddle for a pillow and a gun across his breast.

B2—THE DYING COWBOY. Sung by Sloan Matthews of Alpine, Texas, at Pecos, Texas, 1942. Recorded by John A. Lomax.

"The Dying Cowboy" is a Western adaptation of a song called "The Ocean Burial," the words of which were written in 1839 by the Reverend E. H. Chapin (*The Southern Literary Messenger*, September 1839), and the music for it was copyrighted in 1850 by George N. Allen. The very close relationship of the text is readily apparent, and these lines from the earlier song will suffice as illustration:

"O bury me not in the deep, deep sea."
The words came low and mournfully,
From the pallid lips of a youth who lay,
On his cabin couch at the close of day.

He had wasted and pined 'till o'er his brow,
The death-shade had slowly passed, and now,
When the land and his fond loved home were nigh,
They had gathered around to see him die.

"O bury me not in the deep, deep sea,
Where the billowy shroud will roll over me,
Where no light will break through the dark,
cold wave,
And no sunbeam rest upon my grave."

[For full study references, see J. Frank Dobie, "Ballads and Songs of the Frontier Folk," *Publications of the Texas Folklore Society* (Austin, Tex., vol. VI, 1927, p. 173) and Vance Randolph, *Ozark Folksongs* (Columbia, Mo., 1948, vol. II, p. 184).]

"Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie."
These words came low and mournfully

From the pallid lips of a youth who lay
On his dying bed at the close of day.

He had wasted and pined till on his brow
Death's shadows are slowly gathering now;
He thought of his home and his loved one nigh
As the cowboys gathered to see him die.

"Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie
Where the wild coyote will howl o'er me,
Where the grass . . . sweeps . . . and the
grasses wave,
And the sunbeams beat on a prairie grave.

"Then bury me not on the lone prairie
In a narrow grave just six by three,
Where the buffalo paw and [on] the prairie
[prairie] free,
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

"I've always wished to be lain when I die
In the little churchyard on the green hillside,
By my father's grave there let mine be,
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

"Oh, [give] me then a mother's prayer,
And a sister's tear might mingle there,
Where my friends can come and weep o'er me,
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie.

"_____ may be shed
For one who lived [lies] on the prairie bed;
It pained me then and it pained [pains] me
now—
She had curled these locks, she had kissed this
brow.

"Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie
Where the wild coyote can howl o'er me,
In a narrow grave just six by three,
Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie."

[Mr. Matthews's broken text—the result of forgetfulness and perhaps of initial misunderstanding as the song first came to him—is, from the folklorist's point of view, an excellent example of the folk process of the transmission of material, and of what can happen by way of "recreation" and of deterioration as the song passes from one person to another.]

B3—THE STREETS OF LAREDO. Sung by
Johnny Prude at Fort Davis, Texas, 1942.
Recorded by John A. Lomax.

It must be obvious, even to those uninitiated in the folklore process of the transmission of material, that the present song did not originate in Texas or the West. What cowboy, for example, was ever buried to the sound of drums and fifes? The song actually goes back to a British ballad recounting the death and burial of a soldier. Here the military band is wholly appropriate:

Muffle your drums, play your pipes merrily,
Play the dead march as you go along,
And fire your guns right over my coffin,
There goes an unfortunate lad to his home.

The British ballad itself may have an original Irish source, going back to 1790. In any event, very noticeable changes occur in the song to localize it in cattle country. In the British ballad, the soldier is found "down by Lock Hospital," and not on "the streets of Laredo" or "down by Tom Sherriman's barroom." Also, his death is the result of a slow and lingering social disease, the manner of death accounting in the British ballad for the "hospital." As the song moved to the Southwest, it took on a variety of local trappings—knife, six-shooter, cowboys, gamblers, spurs, rifle, saddle, and card house—all of them tending to obscure the British origin. The song has, of course, in the process of transmission become American, and it is certainly one of the half dozen most popular folk songs of the cowboy. For purposes of comparison, the student should listen to the following Library of Congress recordings: "One Morning in May" on AFS L1, and "The Dying Cowboy" on AFS L20. He should also consult H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs* (The University of Missouri Studies, vol. XV, 1940, p. 392).

As I walked out in the streets of Laredo,
As I walked out in Laredo one day,
I spied a poor cowboy wrapped up in white
linen,
Wrapped up in white linen as cold as the clay.

Oh, beat the drums slowly, and play the fife
lowly,
Play the dead March as you carry me along,
Take me to the green valley, there lay the sod
o'er me,
For I'm a young cowboy, and I know I've done
wrong.

Let sixteen gamblers come handle my coffin,
Let sixteen cowboys come sing me a song,
Take me to the graveyard, and lay the sod o'er
me,
For I'm a poor cowboy, and I know I've done
wrong.

It was once in the saddle I used to go dashing,
It was once in the saddle I used to go gay,
First to the dram house, and then to the card
house,
Got shot in the breast, and I'm dying today.

Get six jolly cowboys to carry my coffin,
Get six pretty maidens to bear up my pall,
Put bunches of roses all over my coffin,
Put roses to deaden the sods as they fall.

Oh, bury me beside my knife and my six-shooter,
My spurs on my heel, my rifle by my side,
And over my coffin put a bottle of brandy,
That's the cowboy's drink, and carry me along.

We beat the drums slowly, and played the fife
lowly,
And bitterly wept as we bore him along,
For we all loved our comrade so brave, young,
and handsome,
We all loved our comrade, although he'd done
wrong.

B4—THE ZEBRA DUN. Sung by J. M. Wad-
dell of Kermit, Texas, 1948. Recorded at
Washington, D.C., by Duncan Emrich.

The "Zebra" Dun is, of course, a ready cor-
ruption of the Z Bar brand, and the song itself,
according to Lomax, "is said to have been com-
posed by Jake, the Negro camp cook for a ranch
on the Pecos River belonging to George W.
Evans and John Z. Means."

Whatever its origin, it is a favorite with cow-
boys who enjoy a practical joke at the expense
of a greenhorn, and who also appreciate top-
hand riding when they see it.

Well, I was camped out on the draw at the head
of Cimarron,
Along came a stranger who wanted to auger
[argue] so,
He was an educated fellow, his words just came
in herds,
And he astonished the natives with his big, jaw-
breaking words.

He asked us for some breakfast, he hadn't had
a smell,
We opened up the chuck box, and bid him help
himself,
He took a plate of beefsteak, some bread, and
some beans,
And then began to talk about those fairy queens.

He talked about the weather, ropes, spurs, and
other things,
He did not seem to know much 'bout working
on the range,
But he just kept on spouting till he made the
boys all sick,
And they began to study just how to play a trick.

He was traveling across the country, straight
'cross the 7 D's,
It seemed he'd lost his job down on the Santa
Fe's,
He'd had some trouble with his boss, he did not
state the cause,
But said he would like to get a fresh, fat saddle
horse.

"Yes, we can let you have one, just fresh and
fat as you please."
This tickled the boys almost to death, they
laughed down in their sleeves,
So Shorty grabbed the lariat, and he caught the
Zebra Dun,
And turned him to the stranger, then waited for
the fun.

Old Dun he's a rocky outlaw, and being very
wild,
He could paw the white out of the moon every
jump for over a mile,
Old Dun he stood quite still, and did not seem
to know,
The stranger had him saddled when he was
a-fixing up to go.

But when that chap mounted, old Dun he quit
the earth,
He traveled perpendicular for all he was worth,
Old Dun he pitched and bellered, just like some
yearling calf,
The stranger was sitting in his saddle, just
a-twirling his mustache.

He thumbed him in the neck, and he spurred
him as he whirled
To show us flunky punchers he was the wolf of
the world,
Old Dun he picked up his head, and decided to
let him ride,
It hurt the old boy's feelings, he'd rather to have
died.

He turned him back to the camp, he'd pitched
for over a mile,
The stranger being very tired, though he began
to smile;
He rode up and dismounted. Said I, "You need
not go,
I can give you a lasting job, and bank you up
with dough.

"If you can sling the catgut just like you rode
old Dun,
Well, you're the man I've been a-looking for just
since the year of one."
"Well, I can sling the catgut and do not do it
slow,
I catch by both forefeet nine times out of ten
for dough.

"And when the herd's stampeding, I'm right
there on the spot,
I put them back to milling like stirring in the
pot."

But there's one thing for certain, and that you
cannot scorn,
All educated fellows are not greenhorns.

B5—THE DREARY BLACK HILLS. Sung by
Harry Stephens of Denison, Texas, 1942.
Recorded at Dallas, Texas, by John A.
Lomax.

"The Dreary Black Hills" is not, of course, a
cowboy song, but it circulated among cowboys
just as many other songs did. The reference to
Cheyenne and the proximity of the Black Hills
to cow country, plus the topical nature of the
subject, made the song a favorite. Of its origin
little is known, but from internal textual evi-
dence, one can guess at a minstrel or vaudeville
source. The words lend themselves easily to

stage elaboration, and the point of origin may
be Cheyenne itself. Mr. Stephens's introductory
remarks, in answer to John Lomax's questions,
are entertaining and valuable comments on the
real nature and quality of cowboy singing. His
statement that singing was done by the indi-
vidual rather than the group may be underlined
for the whole field of folk song in the United
States, excepting, of course, the singing of re-
ligious and work groups.

S: "Heard this up in Wyoming and Montana,
up there on those cow ranges in 19 and 7.

L: "Well, when would the cowboys sing a song
like this?"

S: "Well, after they'd tied up their night horses,
and the day's work was done, why, they'd
always build up a campfire and sit around
till they was ready to go to bed. Then they'd
always see which was the finest singer and
knew the most songs."

L: "Well, would you sing this song all together
or would one man sing it by himself?"

S: "Well, they'd generally each one of them
have such a different kind of tune that each
one would have to sing by himself. Then
they'd recite different stuff. They'd all come
from different places, and been all over the
West."

L: "Recite? What kind of stuff would they re-
cite?"

S: "Well, some of them couldn't . . . couldn't
hit any kind of a tune unless they'd pack it
over their shoulder in a gunny sack, so they'd
just have to kind of say it. And they'd make
out how they'd heard others say it in other
places. They'd probably hit a little bit of a
tune, but it wouldn't be much of a one."

Kind friends, you must pity my horrible tale,
I'm an object of pity, I'm looking quite stale,
I give up my trade selling Wright's Patent Pills
To go hunting gold in the dreary Black Hills.

Don't go away, stay at home if you can,
Stay away from that city, they call it
Cheyenne,
For old Sitting Bull and Comanche Bill
They'll lift up your hair on the dreary Black
Hills.

The roundhouse in Cheyenne is filled every night
With loafers and bummers of most every plight;
On their backs is no clothes, in their pockets
no bills,
Each day they keep starting for the dreary Black
Hills.

I got to Cheyenne, no gold could I find,
I thought of the lunch route I'd left far behind;
Through rain, hail, and snow, froze plumb to the
gills,
They call me the orphant of the dreary Black
Hills.

Kind friends, to conclude, my advice I'll unfold,
Don't go to the Black Hills a-hunting for gold;
Railroad speculators their pockets you'll fill
By taking a trip to those dreary Black Hills.

Don't go away, stay at home if you can,
Stay away from that city, they call it
Cheyenne,
For old Sitting Bull and Comanche Bill
They'll lift up your hair on the dreary Black
Hills.

B6—THE NIGHT HERDING SONG. Sung by
Harry Stephens of Denison, Texas, 1946.
Recorded at Dallas, Texas, by John A.
Lomax.

Of "The Night Herding Song" little need be
said, since we have in Harry Stephens the author
himself, a very rare and unusual occurrence in
the field of folk song. Mr. Lomax originally col-
lected the song from Stephens when he was
gathering material for his book of *Cowboy
Songs* and, fortunately for us, recorded it in
1946 together with Stephens's very interesting
remarks on its creation.

L: "Harry, tell me about the famous night
herding song which you sent to me many
years ago."

S: "Well, we always got night herd years ago
when they didn't have so many fences and
corrals, and that was the biggest job of the
cowboy. We generally have a two-hour shift,
and two to four men on a shift according to
the size of the herd. And when I made up

this song, why, we always had so many dif-
ferent squalls and yells and hollers a-trying
to keep the cattle quiet, I thought I might
as well have a kind of a song to it. So I
drifted on up into Yellowstone Park, and got
a job a-herding stage horses for Wylie [Per-
mannin?] Camping Company. That was back
in 19 . . . 1809 [1909]. So I had . . . they
run out of timothy hay, and I had to herd
these horses day and night at double pay,
about sixteen hours. Well, I had all night to
myself, and black gnats eating me up, and
those horses didn't have sense enough to
stay together—they wasn't like cow ponies—
and had to ride on the head of it all night
long. So I went ahead and put this song to-
gether after several nights' trying."

Oh, slow up, dogies, quit your roving around,
You've wandered and tramped all over the
ground,

Oh, graze along, dogies, and feed kind of slow,
And don't forever be on the go—

Oh, move slow, dogies, move slow.

Hi-yoo, hi-yoo-oo-oo,

Woo-oo-oo-oo-oo.

I've circle-herded, trail-herded, cross-herded, too,
But to keep you together, that's what I can't do;
My horse is leg-weary, and I'm awful tired,
But if I let you get away, I'm sure to get fired—
Bunch up, little dogies, bunch up.

Yoo—oo-oo—oo.

Hey, cattle! Whoo-ooop!

Oh, say, little dogies, when you going to lay down
And quit this forever sifting around?

My limbs are weary, my seat is sore;

Oh, lay down, dogies, like you've laid down
before—

Lay down, little dogies, lay down.

Hay-yup, cattle! cattle!

Hi-yoo, hi-yoo-oo-oo.

Oh, lay still dogies, since you have laid down,

Stretch away out on the big open ground;

Snore loud, little dogies, and drown the wild
sound,

They'll all go away when the day rolls 'round—

Lay still, little dogies, lay still.



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