

The Tenderfoot

C
 I thought one spring, just for fun,
 F C
 I'd see how cow-punching was done;
 F C
 And when the round-ups had begun,
 G C
 I tackled the cattle-king.

Says he, "My foreman is in town,
 F C
 He's at the plaza, his name is Brown;
 F C
 If you see him he'll take you down."
 G C
 Says I, "That's just the thing."

We started for the ranch next day;
 Brown augured me most all the way.
 He said that cow-punching was child play,
 That it was no work at all,
 That all you had to do was ride,
 'Twas only drifting with the tide;
 Oh, how that old cow-puncher lied –
 He certainly had his gall.

He put me in charge of a cavyard,
 And told me not too work too hard,
 That all I had to do was guard
 The horses from getting away;
 I had one hundred and sixty head,
 I sometimes wished that I was dead;
 When one got away, Brown's head turned red,
 And there was hell to pay.

Straight to the bushes they would take,
 As if they were running for a stake,
 I've often wished their neck they'd break,
 But they would never fall.
 Sometimes I could not head them at all,
 Sometimes my horse would catch a fall,
 And I'd shoot on like a cannon ball.
 Till the earth came in my way.

They saddled me up an old gray hack
 With two set-fasts on his back;
 They padded him down with a gunny sack
 And used my bedding all.
 When I got on he quit the ground,
 Went up in the air and turned around,
 And I came down and hit the ground,
 It was an awful fall.
 They picked me up and carried me in
 And rubbed me down with an old stake-pin.
 "That's the way they all begin;
 You're doing well," says Brown.
 "And in the morning, if you don't die,
 I'll give you another horse to try."
 "Oh, say, can't I walk?" says I.
 Says he, "Yes—back to town."

I've traveled up and I've traveled down,
I've traveled this country round and round,
I've lived in city and I've lived in town,
But I've got this much to say:
Before you try cow-punching, kiss your wife,
Take a heavy insurance on your life,
Then cut your throat with a barlow knife,
For it's easier done that way.