

Epitaph

Workin' and ridin' the river together,
We did it the last time today.

I feel the loss for my grand kids
and the flame of Grand Dad's tears.
We rode these trails and guarded this land
for nigh onto 60 good years.

My Dad's ridin' point in his feeder-truck
(these cows are his, not mine.)
and me, heck, still out ridin' a colt-
hope to till 2049.

My brother's found him some greener pastures
a' feeding good folks in town-
His heart was torn and his plans were ruined
when the registered market went down.

My Dad's now perched o'er the meadow he'd baled
Brow sweat turned to salt on his cheek.
His Grandson's movin' cows he's loved.
Hidden trifocal'd eyes could sure speak.

Thru' Lucero trees where eagles have nested-
Now childhood scenes are clear;
We played and we hayed, daydreamed in the shade
Years later, bowed down a deer.

The Vega we rode from can until can't
"Ringo" bucked 'til banged me up sore.
"Chief Crooked-Knife carried kids to his hills"-
Truth mixed with myths by the score.

We'd come in the spring, no 'lectricity,
Help George and drive the mule team.
Apple fights in orchard, dodgin' wasps and rattlers-
How long ago should it seem?

Me deal with pain in many ways,
But I just pen this verse.
Not boozin', drugs, or lonely women-
Own alternatives are worse.

My Dad tells the tale of Uncle Sam's plight
at age 9 and ridin' a mule.
They woke up a nest of mean bumblebees
Buckin' Jack blamed Sam for the duel.

Look! Neath this stone lies Benito Rael
Says "Murio,,, 1915"
On rock next to his could say "West Camp McCartys,
Never more to be seen."

A man born on Ute Creek a doin' his best
for 26 years he tried.
Like folks here before and others did since,
he dreamed, he worked, and he died.

Workin' and ridin' this river together,
We did it the last time today.

July 17, 1995 written while horseback moving and sorting the cattle off the the land at
West Camp. Couldn't come back to polish it until July 30, 1995. Buck helped. Thanks!