

Rowan County Crew

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Come all young men and ladies, fathers and mothers too
I will relate to you the history of the Rowan County crew
Concerning bloody Rowan and many hideous deeds,
My friends, please give attention, remember how it reads.

It was in the month of August, all on the election day,
Johnny Martin he was wounded by Johnny Day,
But Martin could not believe it, he could not think it so,
He thought it was Floyd Tolliver that struck the fatal blow.

They shot and killed Saul Bradley, a sober and innocent man,
Left his wife and loving children to do the best they can,
They wounded young Ad Sizemore, although his life was saved,
He seems to shun the grog-shops since he stood so near t' his grave.

Now Martin did recover, some months had come and passed
All in the town of Morehead those men they met at last,
Tolliver and a friend or two about the streets did walk,
They seemed to be uneasy, with no one wished to talk.

They stepped into Judge Carey's grocery and stepped to the bar,
But little did they think, dear friends had met their fatal hour,
The sting of death was near him, Martin rushed in at the door
A few words passed between them concerning the row before.

The people were soon all frightened, began to rush out of the room,
When a ball from Martin's pistol lay Tolliver in the tomb,
His friends did gather round him, his wife to weep and wail,
Then Martin was arrested and soon confined in jail.

He was put in the jail of Rowanre to remain a little while,
In the hands of law and justice to bravely stand his trial,
The people talked of lynching him, at present they did fail,
The prisoner's friends soon moved him to the Winchester jail.

Some people forged an orderir names I do not know,
Their plan was soon agreed upon, for Martin they did go,
Martin seemed to be discouraged, he seemed to be in dread,
They've sought a plan to kill me, to the jailer Martin said.

They put the handcuffs on him, his heart was in distress,
They hurried to the station to get on the night express,
Along the line she lumbered at her usual speed,
There was only two in number to commit this dreadful deed.

Martin was in ehe smoking car, accompanied by his wife,
They did not want her present when they took her husband's life,
When they arrived at Farmer's they had no time to lose,
A band approached the engineer and toid him not to move.

They stepped up to the prisoner with pistols in their hands,
In death he was soon sinking, he died in iron bands,
His wife she heard the horrid sound, she was in another car,
She cried oh Lordy've killed him when she heard the pistols fire.

Now the death of those two men have caused great trouble in our land,
Caused men to leave their families and take the parting hand,
Retaliating still at war, and it may never cease
I would that I could only see our land once more in peace.

They shot the deputy sheriff, Bumgardner was his name,
They shot him from the bushes after taking deliberate aim,
The death of him was dreadful, it may never be forgot,
His body pierced and torn with thirty-three buckshot

Now I've composed this as a warning, beware all you young men,
Your pistols will cause you trouble, on this you may depend,
In the bottom of the whiskey glass a lurking devil dwells,
It burns the breasts who drink it, and sends their souls to hell.