

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Bullfight on the San Pedro

The Bullfight on the San Pedro

Under the command of Colonel Cook,
When passing down San Pedro's brook,
Where canegrass growing tall and high
Was waving as the breeze passed by;
There as we gained ascending ground,
Out from the grass with fearful sound,
A wild ferocious bull appeared,
And challenged fight with horns upreared.

cho: On the road to California;
On our hard and tedious journey
Far along the Rocky Mountains,
By San Pedro's crystal fountains.

"Stop, stop" said one, "just see that brute."
"Hold," was responded, "let me shoot."
He flashed but failed to fire the gun;
Both stood their ground and would not run.
The man explained, "I want some meat,
It's time again we had a treat."
And saying thus again he shot,
And felled the creature on the spot.

It soon arose to run away,
And then the guns began to play;
All hands at work amid the roar,
The bull was dropped to rise no more.
But lo, it did not end the fight--
A furious herd rushed into sight,
And then the bulls and men around
Seemed all resolved to stand their ground.

In nature's pasture, all unfenced,
A dreadful battle was commenced.
We knew ourselves we must defend,
And must to others aid extend.
The bulls with maddened fury raged,
The men with skillful warfare waged,
Though some from danger had to flee,
And had to clamber up a tree.

A bull at one man made a pass,

Who hid himself amid the grass,
And breathless lay until the brute
Passed him and took another shoot.
The bulls rushed on like unicorns,
And gored the mules with piercing horns,
As if the battle ground to gain
When men and mules should all be slain.

With brutal strength and iron will,
Poised on his horns with master's skill,
A bull, one mule o'er mule did throw
The made the latter's entrails flow.
One bull was shot and when he fell,
A butcher ran his blood to spill,
The bull threw up his horns and caught
The butcher's cap, upon the spot.

"Give up my cap, exclaimed the man,
And chased the bull as on he ran;
The butcher beat, and with his knife,
Cut the bull's throat and closed his life.
O, Cox from on bull's horn was thrown,
Ten feet in air; when he came down,
A gaping flesh wound met his eye.
The vicious bull had gored his thigh.

The colonel and his staff were there,
Mounted and witnessing the war;
A bull one hundred yards away
Eyed Colonel Cook as easy prey.
But Corp'ral Frost stood bravely by,
And watched the bull with steady eye;
The brute approached near, and more near,
But Frost betrayed no sign of fear.

The colonel ordered him to run,
Unmoved he stood with loaded gun;
The bull came up with daring tread,
When near his feet, Frost shot him dead.
Whatever cause, we do not know,
But something prompted them to go;
When all at once in frantic flight
The bulls ran bellowing out of sight.

And when the fearful fight was o'er,
And sound of muskets heard no more,
At least a score of bulls were found
And two mules dead upon the ground.

Tune: Old Dan Tucker

This song tells of an incident which happened to the Mormon Battalion, a group of 500 Mormon volunteers who were mustered into the US Army for the war with Mexico. They marched from Iowa to So. California and back, but this was the only battle in which they participated.

Casualties: two men wounded, several mules killed, and on the other side, between 20 and 60 bulls killed. The battle took place in December 1846(?)

JW

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