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Old Pike

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I once knew a man by the name of Pike,
B'longed to the family of Riggins.
And like an old fool, he bought an old mule
And started for the California diggins.

cho: Haul off your coat, roll up your sleeves,
The plains am a hard road to travel
Haul off your coat, roll up your sleeves,
The plains am a hard road to travel I believe.

He loaded his mule with bacon and beans,
Hardtack, tobacco, and whiskey.
He would-a took more, but the mule was too pore,
It made the old fellow feel risky.

He traveled on through the mud and mire,
Till he came to old Platte river.
There he went to swim across, the mule was lost,
And away went his bacon forever.

Old Pike swam out like a half-drowned rat,
Minus of his boots and his britches.
He turned for home, his good mule gone,
And all for the California riches.

From Folk Songs and Singing Games of the Illinois Ozarks, McIntosh
Note: In the mid-1800s, the word Pike(s) had about the same meaning as
Okie(s) did in the 1930s.
tune is a variant of Jordan is a Hard Road to Travel