

"Tell me first," I answered, "oh, tell me if it's true,
The most awful thing of all that they say of you.
Tell me if you've killed a man, tell me if it's true,
If you have, then go at once; I never will shield you."

Then his eyes flashed on me, looked me straight and true:

"No, my God, I never did! I'll swear it now to you.

Do they say that of me? Well, it is a lie!

Let the red-coats come right here. I'm not afraid to die."

Just a cowboy outlaw, but I asked no more
Than the oath he swore me by that old ranch door.
Turning away from him, food I quickly found,
And, calling him to follow along the stony ground,
"By the river bend," I said, "just one mile away,
There's a cave I know of where you've got to stay."