



The Overland Stage Driver

Tune: The High Salary Driver of the Denver City Line

Written by Nat Stein

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1

I sing to everybody, in the country and the town,
A song upon a subject that's worthy of renown;
I haven't got a story of fairy-land to broach,
But plead for the cause of sticking to the box seat of a coach.

Chorus:

Statesmen and warriors, traders and the rest,
May boast of their professions, and think it is the best;
Their state I'll never envy, I'll have you understand,
Long as I can be a driver on the jolly "Overland."

2

There's beauty never ending, for me, upon the plains,
That's worth a man's beholding, at any cost of pains;
And in the Indian country it offers me a fund
Of glee to see the antelopes and prairie-dogs abscond.

3

The mountains and the canons in turn afford delight,
As often as I pass them, by day or in the night;
That man must be a ninny who'd bury up alive
When all it costs to revel through creation is to drive.

4

Alike are all the seasons and weathers, to my mind;
Nor heat nor cold can daunt me, or make me lag behind,
In daylight and in darkness, through rain and shine and snow,
It's my confirmed ambition to be up and on the go.

5

You ask me for our leader; I'll soon inform you, then;
It's Holladay they call him, and often only Ben*.
If you can read the papers, it's easy work to scan
He beats the world on staging now, "or any other man."

6

And so you must allow me, the agent at his books,
And selling passage tickets, how woebegone he looks!
'T would cause his eyes to twinkle, his drooping heart revive,
Could be but hold the ribbons and obtain a chance to drive.

7

The sup'rintendent, even, though big a chief he be,
Would find it quite a poser to swap off berths with me;
And if division agents, though clever coves and fine,
Should make me such an offer, you can gamble I'd decline.

8

The station-keepers nimble and messengers so gay
Have duties of importance, and please me every way;
But never let them fancy, for anything alive,
I'd take their situations and give up to them my drive.

9

And then the trusty fellows who tend upon the stock,
And do the horses justice, as reg'lar as a clock,
I love them late and early and wish them well to thrive,
But theirs is not my mission, for I'm bound, you see, to drive.

10

A truce to these distinctions, since all the hands incline
To stick up for their business, as I stickup for mine;
And, like a band of brothers, our efforts we unite
To please the traveling public and the mails to expedite.

11

It's thus you're safely carried throughout the mighty West,
Where chances to make fortunes are ever found the best;
And thus the precious pouches of mail are brought to hand

Through the ready hearts that center on the jolly "Overland."

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*Wells, Fargo and Co. controlled the western end of the Central Overland California Route, while the eastern part of the route was under Ben Holladay. He called his line the Holladay Overland and Express Company. His line's western terminus was Salt Lake City.