



The Pioneer Stage Driver

Written and sung by Charley Rhoades

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1

I'm going to tell a story, and I'll tell it in my song,
I hope that it will please you, and I won't detain you long;
It's about one of the old boys, so galas and so fine,
He used to carry mails, on the Pioneer line.

2

He was such a favorite wherever he was seen,
He was known about Virginia by the name of Bally Green;
Oh! he swung a whip so graceful, for he was bound to shine,
As a high-toned driver on the Pioneer line.

3

As he was driving up one night, as lively as a coon,
He saw four men jump in the road, by the pale light of the moon;
One sprung for his leaders, while another his gun he cocks,
Saying, "Bally I hate to trouble you, but pass me out that box."

4

When Bally heard him say these words, he opened wide his eyes,
He didn't know what the devil to do, it took him by surprise;
But he reached down in the boot, saying, "Take it sir with pleasure,"
And out into the middle of the road, went Wells & Fargo's treasure.

5

Now when they'd got the treasure-box, they seem'd quite satisfied,—
The man that held the horses, politely stepped aside,
Saying, "Bally, we've got what we want, just drive along your team,"

And he made the quickest time to Silver City ever seen.

6

If you say greenbacks to Bally now, it makes him feel so sore,
It's the first time he was ever stopped, and he's drove that road before;
But they play'd four hands against his one, and shot guns was their game,
An if it had been in Bally's place, I'd have passed it out the same.

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In the mid-1860s, George "Baldy" Green drove for the Pioneer Stage Company between Placerville and Virginia City. On May 22, 1865, near Silver City, Nevada, three men robbed his stage of \$10,000 in gold and greenbacks. From then on neither highwaymen nor newspapers would leave him alone. The *Territorial Enterprise* noted he narrowly escaped scalping, and someone placed a sign near the spot saying, "Wells, Fargo Distributing Office, Baldy Green, Mgr." Two years later his stage was robbed twice on successive days, and in June 1868, three more robbers relieved him of \$5,000. Green was discharged, but Charley Rhoades' song about him, sung first in San Francisco's melodeon companies, continued to retell his story.

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