

# Rye Whiskey

(From: Ronald L. Ives, Folklore of Eastern Middle Park, Colorado, in The Journal of American Folklore, Vol.54, 1941, pp. 24-43, here pp. 38-9)

O Mollie, O Mollie, for your sake alone,  
I leave my poor parents, my house and my home,  
I'm leaving this country, you caused me to roam,  
For I'm a poor cowboy, and Texas my home.

[Chorus:]

Rye whisky, rye whisky,  
I know you of old,  
You've robbed my flat pockets  
Of silver and gold.  
Rye whisky, you villain,  
You've been my downfall,  
You've roped me and throwed me,  
But I love you for all.

My foot's in my stirrup, my bridle's in my hand,  
I'm leaving my Mollie, the best in the land.  
Her parents don't like me, they tell me I'm poor,  
And say that I never should darken their door.

They say I drink whisky: my money's my own,  
And them as don't like me can leave me alone.  
I eat when I'm hungry, and drink when I'm dry,  
If I don't get rye whisky, I'll lay down and cry.

I'll mount to my saddle, my quirt in my hand,  
And think of you, Mollie, in some other land.  
I think of you, Mollie, for your sake I roam,  
For I'm a poor cowboy, a long ways from home.

When I've spent my last dollar, and lie in boot hill,  
Though my chaps will be rotted, I'll think of you still.  
O Mollie, O Mollie, O Mollie, I cry,  
Just you and rye whisky I'll love 'till I die.

[alternative chorus A:]

I eat when I'm hungry,  
And drink when I'm dry,  
It's cash when I'm hard up,  
And hell when I die.  
Rye whisky, rye whisky,  
Rye whisky I cry,  
If I don't get rye whisky  
I surely will die.

[alternative chorus B:]

If the ocean was whisky,  
And I was a duck,  
I'd dive to the bottom,  
And never come up,  
Rye whisky - (etc. as in A)