

PIONEERS

A wild and reckless follow,
Back in eighteen sixty-four,
Left a cattle ranch in Texas
With a thousand steers or more.
He traveled with a wagon train,
And took along his bride,
A comely lass, they tell me,
With a baby by her side.
She was young, and he was fearless,
And they loved to ride and shoot,
And the girl could sit her saddle,
On a bald-faced broncho brute.
Of course you will remember
Of those days of long ago,
When the redskins kept you guessing,
And you had to take it slow.
Your guards were always posted
When you rounded up for night,
And the woman made the coffee
And you ate by camp fires' light.
Your neighbors were the redskins-
They would skulk along the way-
And were watching you by starlight,
And would follow you by day,
Always ready, always waiting.
They would shoot, and steal, and kill,
And would snipe with flint-lock muskets
From a tree or covered hill.
Every morning when you started
On your way, you never knew
If you'd live to see the sunset
Or the ocean's waters blue.
Many steers were killed or stolen,
But at last there came a day,
When you stopped at Old Ballena
And your hearts were bright and gay.
I have written of a journey
Of a hardy pioneer,
Who crossed the death strewn prairie
Without a thought of fear.
And the knowledge of your hardship
I have heard this very night
From a man who came from Lano,
And his eyes were shiny bright
When he told me of your childhood
Back in Texas, far away,
And he one would ride beside you,
And you used to work and play.
But you left, while he was very young,

He said, then stopped to cry,
And he wanted much to see you
And to talk of days gone by.

So I'll leave for a moment
While you think and dream alone
Of a boy you used to know as Miles,
Whose father's name was Stone.

By Harry H. Ferris