Johnson County War

Chris LeDoux

Headed for Wyoming in 1882, a woman, a team and a wagon
Gonna make our dreams come true
Settled in the foothills of the big horn mountain slope
Life is sweet, we lived on the meat of the deer and the antelopeWe cut house logs upon the mountain with the team we hauled 'em down
Peeled 'em and we stacked 'em up for a house and bought some ground
Traded for some cattle, turned 'em out on the open range
The skies were blue, we never knew how things were gonna changeOh, Powder River, you're muddy and you're wide
How many men have died along your shore?
When you brand a man a rustler, he's gotta take a side
There's no middle ground in this Johnson County warWell the neighbors stopped by yesterday while I was outside choppin' wood
They filled me in on a local news, ain't none of it sounded good
Said, there had been some cattle stealin' by some no count outlaw bands
We'd all been branded rustlers by the big ranchers of this landWell, it was us against the cattlemen and the years just made it worse
First the drought and then the tough winter
Johnson County had been dealt a curse
Then there came the story about the two dry gulch attacks
Ranger Jones and John Tisdale had been both shot in the backOh, Powder River, you're muddy and you're wide
How many men have died along your shore?
When you brand a man a rustler, he's gotta take a side
There's no middle ground in this Johnson County warThen, last night at supper time riders stopped by chance
They said cattleman and their hired guns just burned the Kaycee Ranch
Two men had died this mornin', shot down in the snow
Now the vigilante army was on the march to BuffaloWell the County was in an uproar and every man saddled up to ride
Caught the cattlemen at the TA Ranch and surrounded all four sides
We hailed the house with bullets and swore they were gonna pay
But the cavalry came across the plains and once again they saved the dayWell, they marched 'em off to Cheyenne, no one went to jail
The cattlemen were all turned loose and the hired guns hit the trail
And I guess the only justice wasn't much to say the least
Last winter me and mine ate mighty fine on the cattle baron's beefOh, Powder River, you're muddy and you're wide
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