

The snow falls on the passes  
And it covers up the rails  
And the hired men ride up to make them clean  
It's a winter camp and a frozen damp  
And a shovel in your hand  
And a coal train comes rumbling through the seam

That morning came up shining  
Clear and sharp as broken glass  
We were riding for the tracks at Sugaree  
All holler and high spirit  
And the devil take the last  
And Henry lay a wager then to me

He said "I've got five dollars  
And a whiskey at the bar  
Says I make the tracks ahead of you"  
So we touched our horses up  
Sent them running down the hill  
And I did something I never meant to do

Well I cut hard behind him  
From his blind side I come around  
Just as we were going down the scree  
I only meant to scare him but he tumbled to the ground  
And he broke his neck beneath the doubletree

So you take him cut him out in a length of pine  
Lay him out in a suit of clothes  
Best that you can find  
Lay his body gentle in the ground  
And say a prayer for Henry  
Before you lay him down

The night before poor Henry died  
We slept on open ground  
The circus of the stars a blaze of white  
Henry was the best friend that I ever had  
And I slept still as a child that night