The Founding of the Famous C.P.R.
Words by Powder River Jack Lee

In the valley of Ontario you started—
With heroic purpose crossing ranges far,
You pioneers of Canada who sponsored—
You founders of the famous C.P.R.

Chorus

Such a record laid in steel of daring genius—
That the dreaming of these pioneers come true,—
Oh remember "The River Valley"—
And what the C.P.R. has done for you.

© MCMXXXVII by the Chart Music Publishing House, Inc., Chicago
THE FOUNDING OF THE
FAMOUS C.P.R.
submitted by Bob Bovee

Bob Bovee is an old-time cowboy singer from Minnesota. When he was in Calgary on a performing tour he mentioned to John Leeder that he had a Canadian railroad song in his files. John asked him to send it along, and here it is.

Bob indicated that the song was composed by Powder River Jack Lee – a well-known (and controversial) singer/composer [see BULLETIN, 20:2, pp. 7, 13]. It appeared in a book entitled "Songs of the Range: Cowboy Wails of Cattle Trails" (Chicago: Chart, 1937). The words represent an outsider's view of the C.P.R., given the amount of romance and nostalgia presented in them.

Tim Rogers

THE FOUNDING OF THE
FAMOUS C.P.R.
by
Jack Lee

In the valley of Ontario you started,
With heroic purpose crossing ranges far,
You pioneers of Canada who sponsored,
The founders of the famous C.P.R.

Chorus
Such a record laid in steel of daring genius,
That the dreaming of these pioneers came true;
Oh remember "The Bow River Valley",
and what the C.P.R. has done for you.

When the purpose swept across the great Dominion,
For Confederation B.C. thought it best,
That all Canada must build and start a railroad,
That would link the oceans lying east and west.

Back in eighteen eighty-one when Stephen stated,
"We must start this railroad west from Montreal,
Push right on across the northern lakesides."
He was backed up by each member, one and all.

Oh consider this tremendous undertaking
As they struggled onward, fighting sure but slow,
And remember the Bow River Valley,
And the daring builders fifty years ago.

You have heard just how they forged right steady onward,
Out across each mighty wilderness and plain,
Creeping slowly on through forests, farms and ranches,
Fighting elements and Indians again.

How these brave men battled cold and hard privation,
Grim with purpose and right noble was the test,
And old Crowfoot told those builders of a nation,
They would never reach Calgary in the west.

Now you speed and travel o'er this great Dominion,
You may bid all your friends fond adieu,
Remember east and west in all this nation,
That the C.P.R. will bring you safely through.

Building onward o'er the great Canadian Rockies,
They who sail their steamships now on seven seas,
On through Calgary and up Bow River Valley,
Where Tom Wilson found the famous Lake Louise.

Struggling on with ceaseless urge and persevering
This gigantic symbol of a mighty test;
Through the Fraser River Valley's rocky canyons,
With Vancouver eager waiting in the west.

When you travel through the great Canadian Rockies,
You will find a mighty welcome near and far,
And remember the world's best travel system
That you're guests of the famous C.P.R.

On the C.P. round this world you travel safely,
Hotels, money orders, telegrams and mails,
Trusted bearers to the world's most farthest places
And you'll stay right on their steamships and their rails.

Oh the hotels have become a famous system,
The Palliser at Calgary is best,
And the Banff Springs Hotel up in the Rockies,
And Lake Louise is the finest in the west.

Come and tarry in the shadows of the Rockies,
The fame of Lake Louise goes near and far,
And we greet officials of this railroad,
With three cheers for the famous C.P.R.