

Classic Poetry Series

**Arthur Chapman**  
**- poems -**

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## Arthur Chapman(1873-1935)

Arthur Chapman (1873 – 1935) was an early twentieth century American poet and newspaper columnist. He wrote a sub-genre of American poetry known as Cowboy Poetry. His most famous poem was Out Where the West Begins.

# Arroyo Al On Worry

They'd make a rattlin' roundup, sure,  
The troubles known to man,  
If we could gather all the kinds  
Since this old world began.  
But 'mong the troubles on life's range,--  
The common and preferred,--  
That critter labeled Worry is  
The orn'riest of the herd.  
You think you've got him roped and tied  
And humbled in the dust,  
But soon that critter's up again  
And raisin' clouds of dust.  
You're feelin' fine--the sky is blue,  
Your laugh's a happy man's--  
But Worry comes cavortin' in  
And stampedes all your plans.  
Seems like, when this here world was made  
For me and you, old pal,  
This Worry critter should have been  
Shut tight in some corral.

Arthur Chapman

# Christmas Shopping In Cactus Center

Women's scarce in Cactus Center, and there ain't no bargain stores  
Fer to start them Monday rushes that break down the stoutest doors;  
But we had some Christmas shoppin' that the town ain't over yet,  
Jest because of one small woman and a drug store toilet set.

She was Cactus Center's teacher, and she had n't left the stage  
'Fore she had the boys plum locoed - and I don't bar youth nor age;  
She was cute and smart and pretty, and she might 'a' been here yet  
If it had n't been fer Dawson and his drug store toilet set.

It was old and scratched and speckled, for 't was in his case for years,  
But ol' Dawson, sharp and clever, put a whisper in our ears-  
'Lowed he'd sell that set at auction, and he says: 'Now, boys, you bet  
This 'ill make a hit with Teacher - this here swell new toilet set.'

Well the biddin' stated lively, and it got to gettin' hot,  
For every mind in Cactus on that single thing was sot;  
Purty soon I'd staked my saddle, worth two hundred dollars net,  
Jest to own fer one short second that blamed drug store toilet set.

It was then began the shootin' - no one seems to know jest how -  
And 't was lack of ammunition that at last broke up the row;  
And thirteen of us was hurted, but the worst blow that we met  
Was in findin' that some bullets had gone through that toilet set.

But we plugged the punctures in it, and we plugged the wounded, too,  
And agreed we'd arbitrate it, and the bunch 'd see it through;  
So we sent a gift committee, but they came back sorer yet -  
Fer the teacher'd fluttered Eastward - so we've got that that toilet set.

Arthur Chapman

# Classic Dancing In Cactus Center

Down here in Cactus Center we have lived a life apart;  
We've been far, we're frank in sayin', from the headquarters of art...  
Our work has kept us humpin', roundin' up the festive steer;  
We admit that things aesthetic find us bringin' up the rear;  
All of which has some small bearin' on a thing that's knocked us cold--  
That has set the cowboys talkin' when the cigarettes is rolled,  
And has proved to be the reason why the Two-Bar boss has swore  
That this Terpsichory goddess gits his O K nevermore.

It started when a lady wrote Bear Hawkins from the East  
That she'd like to rent a pasture, if he had one to be leased.  
She said she wished to use it for her classic dancin'-school,  
And Bear wrote back: 'Dear madam, I am sure a locoed fool,  
But I fail to see why pastures beat the schoolhouse dancin'-floor,  
Which, of course, it ain't my worry, as it's grass you're payin' for;  
So you'll find the pasture ready, right behind the main corral,  
And I speak up for some lessons for my old friend, Cattle Sal.'

Well, Bear's eyes stuck out like doorknobs when the dancin'-school arrove,  
And jest thirty-eight young women to the cattle ranch he drove;  
They was headed by a woman with a most determined jaw--  
The kind who, in all comp'ny constitoots herself the law;  
And she said: 'Now, Mister Hawkins, we have come here to the West  
To create some classic dances that will give our art new zest.  
For among those wild surroundings it will be no trick to find  
Some stunts to make Pavlowa fade from out the public mind.'

When Old Pete went out, next sunrise, for to rope his pinto hoss,  
He thought he saw ghosts dancin', and he called upon the boss;  
And the boss, though he'd been sober for a week, or maybe more,  
Thought he must be seein' visions like he never seen before;  
'Cause those dancers were disportin', all in robes of dazzlin' white,  
And Old Pete says: 'Boss, I'm quittin'--you kin pay me off to-night.  
As it's me for Cactus Center, lest I feel disposed to prance  
And to tramp down good alfalfa in this sort of classic dance.'

Well, there was n't much work doin' in the round-up gang for days;  
There was cows that went unbranded, and good steers was lost as strays;  
The cowboys sat for hours on the top rail of the fence

And watched the classic dancers, as they flitted here and whence,  
Till Bear Hawkins said: 'Dear madam, you must sure detour your freight;  
While we like your classic dancin', we must hand it to you straight  
That you've got our punchers locoed, and the case is just this size:  
You must quit this cattle country, or the price of beef will rise.'

Thought the leader was offended, Hawkins took his stand quite firm,  
And the dancers started Eastward, cuttin' short their Wild West term;  
But they've left a deep impression, and the boys don't give two hoots  
In reels and clogs, and such things, for to agitate their boots;  
And when the schoolhouse dances are given, now and then,  
You can hear the whispered comments 'mong a lot of wall-flower men,  
And you know that they are talkin' of the palpitatin' days  
When we got our introduction to the classic dancin' craze.

Arthur Chapman

# Daylight Saving In Cactus Center

Down here in Cactus Center we believe in savin' time;  
Unlike the waste of powder, wastin' daylight is a crime;  
So we held a solemn meetin', down in Poker Johnson's place,  
And agreed that here in Cactus every clock must change its face;  
'For,' Bear Hawkins said, reflective, 'it will give one hour more  
For the studyin' by sunlight of this here draw poker lore.  
We are proud of all the sunshine that suffuses yonder range;  
If we was n't boosters for it, it's be almighty strange.'

But a shadder fell upon us when old Pegleg brought the mail  
And he stumped in, from his stage seat, with his customary hail,  
For he said, when we had told him of our daylight savin' plan:  
'This is rough on pore old Pegleg-you have got me on the pan,  
For they've just sent word from Lone Wolf that the old-time schedule stays,  
And they say I'll run this bus line just as on all previous days,  
So I'd like to have you tell me how I'll land among you here  
At the time I'm leavin' Lone Wolf. Do I make my meanin' clear?

We are peaceful here in Cactus-it takes lots to stir our ire-  
But this impudence from Lone Wolf set our fightin' blood afire;  
So we 'phoned the Two-Bar foreman, and the Star, and Lazy Y,  
And we got word to the round-ups and they let the brand-irons lie,  
And the top hands come a-peltin' from the wide and dusty plain,  
And we even took a sheepman, though it went against the grain.  
Whereupon, when all assembled, we sent word: 'Hunt trees to climb,  
For we're comin' over, Lone Wolf, and we'll make you change your time!'

There's been battles over poker, there's been bloodshed over booze,  
There's been men who've gone to Boot Hill 'cause of words that they would use;  
Men have been turned into lead mines for remarks misunderstood;  
Men who would n't drink have perished-men have died because they would'  
But the fight of fights was started when we entered Lone Wolf's streets  
And we carried daylight savin' to the uttermost retreats.  
Though we lost some ten good gunmen, we was pleased, on takin' stock,  
When we found that we had shot holes in each laggin' Lone Wolf clock.

Arthur Chapman

# Discipline In Cactus Center

We welcome folks in Cactus Center if they've got an honest lay;  
If their game ain't too durn crooked, we never stop the play;  
But a get-rich-quicker blew in, with a game we did n't like,  
So we did n't waste the minutes in invitin' him to hike.  
He advertised extensive in the papers 'way down East  
That he run a school fer cowboys, and there were n't no bronco beast  
That his graduates was 'feared of, and a feller was a fool  
If he could n't learn rough ridin' in this correspondence school.  
When Bear Hawkins heard about it, and about the tons of mail  
The feller was receivin', his brown face near turned pale;  
And he says: 'Boys, now jest tell me, am I dreamin' or awake,  
That our town of Cactus Center stands for any such raw fake?'  
So we gathered on the quiet, and we yanked the feller out,  
And we made him ride our broncos, till he'd qualified past doubt  
Fer the title of Perfesser, which we give him then and there,  
And we left him filled with needles from the festive prickly pear.

Arthur Chapman

# Easter At Cactus Center

You kin talk about your racin' with your horses neck and neck--  
We have had one here in Cactus that's the high card in the deck.  
It was when a bunch o' punchers--must have been an even score--  
Were competin' fer a sky-piece down in Morris Levy's store.  
It was decked with loads o' flowers, and a full-grown tree or two,  
With a string of clingin' ivy windin' up and down and through;  
It had come clean from Las Vegas, fer old Levy had a hunch  
That the school teacher would get it from the Cactus Center bunch.  
Bud Ender reached the counter, in about one rabbit jump,  
With others clost behind him, in a howlin', cussin' lump;  
Bud had paid two shinin' twenties, but he let it go at that,  
Fer some hombrey broke the winder and stampeded with the hat.  
Well, our shins was cruel punctured with each other's flyin' spurs  
As we rushed out of the doorway fer to make that bonnet hers;  
You could see the flowers noddin' on the head o' Skinny Sam,  
And it looked like coin to doughnuts he'd be first to that schoolma'am.  
But we heard a pony comin', and it passed us on a lope,  
With Bear Hawkins in the saddle and a-swingin' of his rope;  
He made a heel-cast perfect and old Skinny dropped, kerthud!  
With his head, in that there bonnet, buried deep down in the mud.  
We are fine at mendin' saddles, and we're pretty fair on pants,  
But on patchin' millinery we don't stand a two-spot chance;  
So we chipped in, after seein' that we needed somethin' new,  
And we sent two boys to Vegas jest to rush another through.  
They killed off six cayuses, but they got back jest in time  
With a sky-piece flower garden any girl'd think was prime;  
But they spent all Easter cussin'--and small wonder that they did--  
Fer the teacher'd gone a-visitin', and her mother got the lid.

Arthur Chapman

# Journalism In Cactus Center

Down here in Cactus Center we ain't much on splittin' hairs;  
In the fancy shades of language we are puttin' on no airs,  
But we're shy one young reporter--it was strange how it occurred--  
Who mussed up a brilliant future when he chose jest one wrong word.  
He hustled local items for the 'Stockmen's Weekly Star';  
He was young and plumb ambitious, and he made friends near and far;  
He never knocked nobody, but he allus tried to boost,  
And we thought he'd make a wonder on the journalistic roost.  
But he wrote, with good intentions, as most every one allows,  
'Our townsman, Poker Johnson, has gone South to rustle cows';  
He meant to say that Poker was a-roundin' up his brand,  
For he did n't know that 'rustle' meant to 'thieve' in Cattle Land.  
When Poker Johnson read it he put on an extry gun,  
And he came to town a-frothin' with his bronco on the run;  
The reporter got a warnin' and he hopped a cowboy's beast  
And he started navigatin' for the calm and distant East.  
We got old Poker quiet when he'd busted up the press,  
And had shot holes in the sanctum and had made the type of mess;  
And we'd like a bright reporter who is broke to Western slang--  
No more such babes shall money with out newspaper she-bang!

Arthur Chapman

# Men In The Rough

Men in the rough--on the trails all new-broken--  
Those are the friends we remember with tears;  
Few are the words that such comrades have spoken--  
Deeds are their tributes that last through the years.

Men in the rough--sons of prairie and mountain--  
Children of nature, warm-hearted, clear eyed;  
Friendship with them is a never-sealed fountain;  
Strangers are they to the altars of pride.

Men in the rough--curt of speech to their fellows--  
Ready in everything, save to deceive;  
Theirs are the friendships that time only mellows,  
And death cannot sever the bonds that they weave.

Arthur Chapman

# Moving Pictures In Cactus Center

The culture game in Cactus has been boosted quite a spell  
By a gent with movin' pictures--and he played the show game well;  
But he had himself sure tangled, and the uplift game was messed  
When he tried to show a drammer of the palpitatin' West.

The hall was filled with punchers when he turned up his machine,  
And showed up what was labeled a real Wild Western scene;  
There was mountains in the background, which was real enough, perhaps,  
But you oughter seem them actors that cavorted round in chaps!

We stood it without knockin' till a bronk drifts in the play  
And the cowboy and his sweetheart make their weddin' getaway;  
Then we groans in chorus mighty, and we turns jest where we sits,  
And it only takes one volley to reduce the lamp to bits.

Then we sought the frightened owner, and we paid the damage done,  
But we cautioned him hereafter nary Western film to run;  
'Cause,' we say, 'it makes us nervous--nay, we may say, peeved and cross--  
When we see an actor-cowboy mount the wrong side of a hoss!'

Arthur Chapman

# October On The Sheep Range

There ain't no leaves to turn to gold-  
There ain't a tree in sight-  
In other ways the herder's told  
October's come, all right.

Jest like ten thousand souls, all lost,  
The wind howls-ain't it nice!-  
The water-hole is froze acrost  
With crinkly-crackly ice.

The sheep bed down before the sun  
Has hit the rim of hills;  
The prairie wolves are on the run  
To make their nightly kills.

But kyards are sayin', 'Solitaire,'  
The bacon's fryin' prime;  
The old sheep wagon's free from care  
In late October time.

Arthur Chapman

# Out Among The Big Things

Out among the big things —  
The mountains and the plains —  
An hour ain't important,  
Nor are the hour's gains;  
The feller in the city  
Is hurried night and day,  
But out among the big things  
He learns the calmer way.

Out among the big things —  
The skies that never end —  
To lose a day ain't nothin',  
The days are here to spend;  
So why not give 'em freely,  
Enjoyin' as we go?  
I somehow can't help thinkin'  
The good Lord means life so.

Out among the big things —  
The heights that gleam afar —  
A feller gets to wonder  
What means each distant star;  
He may not get an answer,  
But somehow, every night  
He feels, among the big things,  
That everything's all right.

Arthur Chapman

# Out Where The West Begins

Out where the handclasp's a little stronger,  
Out where the smile dwells a little longer,  
That's where the West begins;  
Out where the sun is a little brighter,  
Where the snows that fall are a trifle whiter,  
Where the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter,  
That's where the West begins.

Out where the skies are a trifle bluer,  
Out where friendship's a little truer,  
That's where the West begins;  
Out where a fresher breeze is blowing,  
Where there's laughter in every streamlet flowing,  
Where there's more of reaping and less of sowing,  
That's where the West begins;

Out where the world is in the making,  
Where fewer hearts in despair are aching,  
That's where the West begins;  
Where there's more of singing and less of sighing,  
Where there's more of giving and less of buying,  
And a man makes friends without half trying —  
That's where the West begins.

Arthur Chapman

## Pete's Error

There's a new grace up on Boot Hill, where we've planted Rowdy Pete;  
He died one evenin', sudden, with his leather on his feet;  
He was Cactus Center's terror with that work of art, the Colt,  
But, somehow, without warnin', he up and missed his holt.

His fav'rite trick in shootin' was to grab his victim's right,  
Then draw his own revolver — and the rest was jest 'Good-night';  
He worked it in succession on nine stout and well-armed men,  
But a sickly-lookin' stranger made Pete's feet slip up at ten.

Pete had follered out his programme and had passed the fightin' word;  
He grabbed the stranger's right hand, when a funny thing occurred;  
The stranger was left-handed, which Pete hadn't figgered out,  
And, afore he fixed his error, Peter was dead beyond all doubt.

It was jest another instance of a flaw in work of man;  
A lefty never figgered in the gunman's battle plan;  
There ain't no scheme man thinks of that Dame Nature cannot beat —  
So his pupils are unlearnin' that cute trick they got from Pete.

Arthur Chapman

# The Bunkhouse

The bunkhouse on the cattle ranch  
Was lowly, but at night  
When its small window was aglow  
We hurried in that light,  
And merrily we trooped within  
And flung our saddles down,  
And there were tales for all to hear  
Told by the plainsmen brown.

The bunkhouse walls were papered o'er  
With scraps from everywhere —  
With pictures of great battleships  
And ladies who were fair;  
And all could read strange bits of news,  
While many comrades' scrawls  
Were written there, illegibly,  
Upon the bunkhouse walls.

I've traveled many miles since then  
But oft, when sets the sun,  
I think about the bunkhouse, low,  
Where cowboys, one by one,  
Came strolling in to chat and smoke  
And play a game of cards;  
I'd even stand for their long snores —  
Where are you, good old pards.

Arthur Chapman

# The Cowboys Homing

Bill's home ag'in from Europe, where he featured with a show,  
But he don't talk none about it — his words jest seem to flow  
On the subject of home-comin', and this glorious Southwest land,  
Which talk, to all us people, is some hard to onderstand.

The stage-driver was tellin' when he hit the sagebrush flat  
That's south of Cactus Center, Bill jest wept behind his hat,  
And he nearly went plum dotty, his joy was so intense,  
At the prairie dogs a-scoldin' behind each wire fence.

When the driver stopped at Arid, fer a meal and fer a rest,  
Bill pinned a sprig of cactus like a flower on his vest;  
He couldn't eat fer lookin' at that endless, dreary plain —  
I guess it makes men homesick fer to cross the ragin' main.

So we let Bill kinder babble 'bout these things we know so well,  
And we're all a-waitin', patient, for the glories he will tell;  
In a week or two he'll see things like he hadn't been away —  
But the homin' joy has got him on the locoed list to-day.

Arthur Chapman

# The Cow-Puncher's Elegy

I've ridden nigh a thousand leagues upon two bands of steel,  
And it takes a grizzled Westerner to know just how I feel;  
The ranches dot the strongholds of the old-time saddlemen,  
And the glory of the cattle days can ne'er come back again.  
Oh, the creak of saddle leather--  
Oh, the sting of upland weather  
When the cowmen roamed the foothills and drove in ten thousand steers;  
Through the years, back in the dreaming,  
I can see the camp-fires gleaming,  
And the lowing of the night-herd sounds, all faintly, in my ears.  
There's a checkerboard of fences on the vast and wind-swept range;  
And the haystacks and the windmills make the landscape new and strange,  
And the plains are full of farmers, with their harrows and their ploughs;  
On the roadsides loiter kidlets, who are 'driving home the cows!'  
Oh, the quickly faded glory  
Of the cowboy's brief, brief story!  
How the old range beckons vainly in the sunshine and the rain!  
Oh, the reek of roundup battle  
And the thund'ring hoofs of cattle--  
But why dream a useless day-dream, that can only give one pain?  
Where have gone those trails historic, where the herders sought the mart?  
Where have they gone the saucy cow-towns, where the gunman played his part?  
Where has gone the Cattle Kingdom, with its armed, heroic strife?  
Each has vanished like a bubble that has lived its little life.  
Oh, the spurs we set a-jingling,  
And the blood that went a-tingling  
When we rode forth in the morning, chaps-clad knights in cavalcade;  
And the mem'ries that come trooping,  
And the spirits, sad and drooping,  
When the cowman looks about him at the havoc Time has made.

Arthur Chapman

# The Diamond Hitch

When camp is moved, at break of day,  
Then comes old Packer Bill--a king  
Who rules, with most despotic sway,  
The while he loads the pack-mule string;  
'Now, stand off, fellers, give him room!  
Now, let the critter buck and pitch;  
That load will stay till crack o' doom  
'Cause Bill has slung the diamond hitch.'  
The helpers stand in trembling awe  
And watch the ropes weave round the pack;  
The artist's lightest word is law  
While strong and deft hands show their knack;  
A false move condemnation brings--  
'This noose must go jest thus and sich;  
No tenderfoot must bobble things  
When Old Bill slings the diamond hitch.'  
Old Bill is gone--and o'er the ways  
His caravans trailed, in the past,  
The engine thunders through the haze  
That hangs above the prairie vast;  
But ere the dawn of life is fanned,  
Disclosing land of fence and ditch,  
I seem to seek the pack-mules stand  
While old Bill slings the diamond hitch.

Arthur Chapman

# The Dude Center

We used to run a cow-ranch,  
In all that old term meant,  
But all our ancient glories  
In recent years have went;  
We're takin' summer boarders,  
And, puttin' it quite rude,  
It's now the cowboy's province  
To herd the festive dude.

We used to run an outfit,  
The greatest in the West;  
Our cowboys were the wonders —  
Our roundups were the best;  
The punchers still are with us,  
But now they merely guide  
The tenderfoot from Boston  
Who's learnin' how to ride.

We used to brand our cattle  
And ship `em wide and far;  
But now we import humans  
From off the Pullman car;  
The dudes have got us captures  
And tied and branded, too;  
And the cowboy's readin' Ibsen  
When his daily toil is through.

Arthur Chapman

# The Herder's Reverie

The sheep are down at the water, a-drinkin' their bloomin' fill,  
An' me and the dog are dozin', as herders and collies will;  
The world may be movin' somewheres, but here it is standin' still.

It is standin' still as a picter, and even the clouds o'erhead  
Look just like the clouds that are painted on the roof of a sky-blue shed.  
And it seems if, to fill the picter, us and the sheep should be dead.

It's hard to think that in cities there's men who are goin' to mad,  
Each strivin' to beat his fellows and get what the others had;  
And from this here peaceful viewpoint, such doin's look bad, plum bad.

So the shadows lengthen and lengthen, in the long-drawn lazy day;  
Has any one been any happier than me and my dog -- now say!  
I wish, when it's time fer cashin', I could pass in my checks this way.

Arthur Chapman

# The High-Heeled Boots

He stands upon the city street, keen-eyed, and brown of face,  
He seems to bring a breath of air from some broad prairie space;  
He's perched upon a pair of heels that fit the stirrup's curve,  
That meet the bucking bronco's plunge and counteract each swerve;  
And of all the chaps with whom the gods are ever in cahoots  
Give me the cattle-puncher in the high-heeled boots.

He brings a hint of wider skies, of ranges that are vast,  
Of manful vigils in the days when sweeps the wintry blast;  
All out of step with things in town, he sees the crowd surge by;  
The sage is in his nostrils still — he hears the gaunt wolf cry;  
He rides as Alexander rode — the bell rings when he shoots —  
The gallant cattle-puncher in the high-heeled boots.

He is the last of that old guard defending Cattle Land,  
Those knights who jousted for the cause — blood brothers of the brand;  
But now they've fenced the water-hole, they're harrowing the plain,  
They're changing all the sagebrush flats to fields of waving grain;  
The cowmen will be gone, they say, and there are no recruits —  
Good-bye, brave cattle-puncher in the high-heeled boots!

Arthur Chapman

# The Magic Mulligan

A rider from the Two-Bar come with news from off the range:  
He said he's seen a dust cloud that looked almighty strange,  
So he rode his bronco over, and there, as bold as brass,  
He seen a sheepman feedin' his flock upon our grass.  
The rider turned home, pronto, and he got the boys aroused,  
And they started, whoopin', for where them woolies browsed.  
But I met 'em, on their mission, and I heard the hull bunch groan  
When I said: 'Now, turn back, fellers, I must play this hand alone.'  
I was mad clear to my gizzard when I started for the camp,  
And I thought of how I'd punish this vile, sheep-herdin' scamp;  
I'd escort him to the deadline, where he'd run his sheep across,  
And in case I had to kill him, why, it would n't be much loss;  
And with such thoughts churnin' in me when I spied his wagon-top  
I rode up to the herder as he watched his wooly crop.  
But he simply grinned up at me, and he said: 'Now, pardner, say,  
Let's set down and have some dinner 'fore we start to scrap to-day.'

He had a stew jest ready and he dished a plateful out,  
And I set and et that plateful and I heard far angels shout;  
I could hear gold harps a-twangin' and my rough thoughts seemed to melt  
As he dished another plateful and I loosened up my belt.  
Then I laid aside my six-guns while the herder dished more stew,  
And at least my foreman rode up, as I knowed that he would do,  
And he set cross-legged with me, and he et, and more hands come,  
And afore that sheepman's cookin' quite the loudest was struck dumb.

It was mulligan he made there, all alone out on the hills,  
This here cook whose magic humbled all my fightin' Toms and Bills;  
You kin talk of hotel dishes, made by chefs from furrin lands,  
But I'll back this sheepman's cookin' 'gainst all European brands.  
So I says, when we had finished: 'You kin make yourself to home,  
You kin pick the choicest grazin' and allow your sheep to roam;  
We will drive our cattle elsewhere--you kin have whate'er you seek--  
If you let us come to dinner, say about three times a week!'

Arthur Chapman

# The Meeting

When walkin' down a city street,  
Two thousand miles from home,  
The pavestones hurtin' of the feet  
That never ought to roam,  
A pony jest reached to one side  
And grabbed me by the clothes;  
He smelled the sagebrush, durn his hide —  
You bet a pony knows!

I stopped and petted him, and seen  
A brand upon his side;  
I'll bet across the prairie green  
He useter hit his stride;  
Some puncher of the gentle cow  
Had owned him — that I knows;  
Which same is why he jest says: 'How!  
There's sagebrush in your clothes.'

He knowed the smell — no doubt it waked  
Him out of some bright dream;  
In some far stream his thirst is slaked—  
He sees the mountains gleam;  
He bears his rider far and fast,  
And real the bull thing grows  
When I come sorter driftin' past  
With sagebrush in my clothes.

Poor little hoss! It's tough to be  
Away from that fair land —  
Away from that wide prairie sea  
With all its vistas grand;  
I feel for you, old hoss, I do —  
It's hard the way life goes;  
I'd like to travel back with you —  
Back where that sagebrush grows!

Arthur Chapman

# The Old Dutch Oven

Some sigh for cooks of boyhood days, but none of them for me;  
One roundup cook was best of all — 't was with the X-Bar-T.  
And when we heard the grub-pile call at morning, noon, and night,  
The old Dutch oven never failed to cook the things just right.

'T was covered o'er with red-hot coals, and when we fetched her out,  
The biscuits there were of the sort no epicure would flout.  
I ain't so strong for boyhood grub, 'cause, summer, spring, or fall,  
The old Dutch oven baked the stuff that tasted best of all.

Perhaps 't was 'cause our appetites were always mighty sharp —  
The men who ride the cattle range ain't apt to kick or carp;  
But, anyway, I find myself a-dreaming of that bread  
The old Dutch oven baked for us beneath those coals so red.

Arthur Chapman

# The Old Yaller Slicker

The old yaller slicker's the cowpuncher's friend-  
His saddle is never without it-  
It's rolled in a bundle and tied at each end,  
But it's ready for service, don't doubt it.

When the sun bathes the hills in a dazzling flow  
Across which the cloud shadows flicker,  
Then the night-herd's asleep, where the round-up tents show,  
With his head on his old yaller slicker.

But in days when the rain drives aslant o'er the range,  
And the far hills the storm king is hiding,  
Then the old yaller slicker gleams ghostlike and strange  
Where the tireless cowboy is riding.

Oh, it's wrinkled and torn, and it never looks new-  
In the town it would stir up a snicker-  
But the style can go hang-it's a friend tied and true,  
is the cowpuncher's old yaller slicker.

Arthur Chapman

# The Old-Timer

He showed up in the springtime, when the geese began to honk;  
He signed up with the outfit, and we fattened up his bronk;  
His chaps were old and tattered, but he never seemed to mind,  
'Cause for worryin' and frettin' he had never been designed;  
He's the type of cattle-puncher that has vanished now, of course,  
With his hundred-dollar saddle on his twenty-dollar horse.

He never seemed to bother over fortune's ups and downs,  
And he never quit his singin' when the gang was full of frowns;  
He would lose his roundup money in an hour of swift play,  
But he never seemed discouraged when he ambled on his way.  
He would hit the trail a-singin', and his smile was out full force,  
Though he'd lost his fancy saddle and he didn't have a horse.

I have wondered where he wanders in these late, degenerate years,  
When there are no boundless ranges, and there are no long-horn steers;  
But I'll warrant he is cheerful, though unfriendly is the trail,  
And his cigarette is flowing, though his grub supply may fail,  
For he had life's happy secret — he had traced it to the source  
In his hundred-dollar saddle on his twenty-dollar horse.

Arthur Chapman

# The Ostrich-Punching Of Arroyo Al

I was broke in Arizony, and was gloomy as a tomb  
When I got a chance at punchin' for an outfit called Star-Plume;  
I did n't ask no wherefores, but jest lit out with my tarp,  
As happy as an angel with the newest make o' harp.

When I struck out from the bunkhouse, for my first day on the range,  
I thought the tracks we follered was peculiar like and strange,  
And when I asked about it, the roundup foreman sez:  
'You ain't a-punchin' cattle, but are herdin' ostriches.'

Well, we chased a bunch of critters on the hot and sandy plain,  
Though 't was like a purp a-racin' with a U. S. A. mail train;  
But at last we got 'em herded in a wire fence corral,  
And the foreman sez, off-hand like: 'Jest go in and rope one, Al.'

Well, the first one that I tackled was an Eiffel Tower bird,  
But that noose ain't pinched his thorax 'fore several things occurred:  
He spread his millinery jest as if he meant to fly,  
And then he reached a stilt out, careless, and smote me above the eye.

They pulled me out from under that millin' mass o' legs,  
And the fed me on hot whiskey and the yolks of ostrich eggs;  
And as soon as I was able, I pulled freight for Cattle Land,  
And the ostrich-punchin' business never gits my O. K. brand.

Arthur Chapman

# Valentine Day In Cactus Center

Things is quiet, here in Cactus, and our bullyvards now lack  
The brisk, upliftin' infloo'nce of the forty-five's loud crack;  
There's three doctors and some nusses, all the way from San Antone,  
And they're patchin' up the leavin's of a Valentine cyclone.

It was all because Bear Hawkins, who's some clever with the pen,  
Drew a bunch o' comic picters of our foremost fightin' men;  
He cartooned Windy Porter as a sheep in cowboy's clothes  
And he handed worse to others 'fore he hails the stage and blows.

It was n't many minutes 'fore the post-office was filled  
With a seethin' bunch a-thirstin' fer to see an artist killed;  
They did n't think o' Hawkins, fer he'd covered up his play,  
So they fell to argumentin', in a gin'ral sort o' way.

The wrecked the gov'ment boxes, and they bloodied up the floor--  
It was freshly laid with sawdust, and the P. M. ripped and swore--  
And they used the doors and shutters and then tore the big sign down  
Fer to bear away the wounded when the smoke had left the town.

So we ain't too strong in Cactus on this comic picter bix,  
And we're waitin' fer Bear Hawkins jest to tip off where he is,  
But he keeps hisself in hidin', though he sent us this one line--  
'I still love you, Cactus Center--won't you be my valentine?'

Arthur Chapman