

Steve Earle & The Dukes, Ben McCulloch

We signed up in San Antone my brother Paul and me
To fight with Ben McCulloch and the Texas infantry
Well the poster said we'd get a uniform and seven bucks a week
The best rations in the army and a rifle we could keep
When I first laid eyes on the general I knew he was a fightin' man
He was every inch a soldier every word was his command
Well his eyes were cold as the lead and steel forged into tools of war
He took the lives of many and the souls of many more

Well they marched us to Missouri and we hardly stopped for rest
Then he made this speech and said we're comin' to the test
Well we've got to take Saint Louie boys before the yankees do
If we control the Mississippi then the Federals are through

Well they told us that our enemy would all be dressed in blue
They forgot about the winter's cold and the cursed fever too
My brother died at Wilson's creek and Lord I seen him fall
We fell back to the Boston Mountains in the North of Arkansas

CHORUS

Goddamn you Ben McCulloch
I hate you more than any other man alive
And when you die you'll be a foot soldier just like me
In the devil's infantry

And on the way to Fayetteville we cursed McCulloch's name
And mourned the dead that we'd left behind and we was carrying the lame
I killed a boy the other night who'd never even shaved
I don't even know what I'm fightin' for I ain't never owned a slave

So I snuck out of camp and then I heard the news next night
The Yankees won the battle and McCulloch lost his life