

Genesis, Ballad Of Big

(Tony Banks/Phil Collins/ Mike Rutherford)

Big Jim Cooley commanded respect, whatever he wanted he could get.
The badge on his waistcoat shone in the sun.
It ain't no lie, Big Jim was feared by everyone.

In the saloon one evening Big took a bet
with a rancher whose name I forget.
He wanted a herd taken over the plain,
He called Jim "yellow", he'll never do that again.
He got mad!

He threw his badge on the floor and walked out,
He's gonna give it a try, he left no doubt.

"Must be mad, must be mad!"
The people wished him well, and good luck.
"Hell, I don't need it!" He laughed, got on his horse and rode away.

Over on the trail, Jim 'n' his crew of five
Were trying their best to keep the cattle alive.
The weather was hard, but so were the men,
Though I don't think even Jim will try this trip again.

His horses were edgy, sensing trouble ahead,
But the trouble didn't start till the men were in bed
A-whooping and a-hollering and flashing their knives,
Big Jim and his men were jumped by an all-star Indian tribe.

He was scared, Big Jim was scared.
Alive, they called him lucky, but not today.
Cos he died like all good cowboys with his boots on next to his men.

Big Jim, he still won't lie down,
For him the bet is still on.
Some say he rides there, cursing still.
Some say they've seen him.