

# Round County Troubles

As sung by  
Grant Faulkner  
07-28-1941 Crandon, WI



## Verse 1.

Come all ye young men and ladies, fathers and mothers too,  
I cite to you the history of the Round County crew.  
Concerning bloody Rowan and the many that are dead  
My friends please give attention, remember how it read.

## Verse 2.

It was in the month of August, and on election day  
John Martin he was wounded, they say by Willie Day.  
Martin could not believe it, he could not think it so  
He though that Floyd Tolerud struck the fatal blow.

## Verse 3.

Martin did recover, some months then came to pass,  
That in the town of Morehead those men both met at last.  
Culver with a [prender] too, about the street did walk  
They seemed to be uneasy, no one wished to talk.

## Verse 4.

He stepped up to the grocery, he stepped up to the bar  
But little did he think, dear friend, it was the fatal hour.  
The sting of death was near him, Martin met him at the door.  
If you were placed between them, guns sounding loud before.

Verse 5.

The people they were frightened, they rushed out of the room.  
A ball from Martin's pistol laid Culver in the tomb.  
His friends soon gathered round him, his wife to weep and wail,  
Martin was arrested and then confined in jail.

Verse 6.

Placed in the jail of Rowan, there to remain a while  
In the hands of law and justice to bravely stand his trial.  
The people talked of lynching him, at present, though, they failed.  
The prisoner's friends then moved him to the Winchester jail.

Verse 7.

Some persons forged an order, their names I do not know.  
The plan was soon agreed upon, for Martin they did go.  
Martin seemed disturbed, he seemed to be in dread.  
"They've got a plan to kill me," to the jailer Martin said.

Verse 8.

They placed the handcuffs on him, his heart was in distress.  
They hurried to the station, stepped on the --- Express.  
Along the line she lumbered, all at her usual speed.  
There were but two in number to commit this dreadful deed.

Verse 9.

Martin was in the smoking car, accompanied by his wife.  
They did not want her present while taking her husband's life.  
When they arrived at Barnard they had no time to lose.  
A man approached the engineer and bid him not to move.

Verse 10.

They stepped up to the prisoner with pistols in their hand  
In death he soon was sinking – he died a wretched man.  
His wife had heard the horrid sound, she was in another car.  
She cried, "Oh Lord, they've killed him," when she heard the pistol fired.

Verse 11.

I composed this as a warning, oh, beware, young men.  
Your pistol will cause trouble, on this you may depend.  
In the bottom of the whiskey glass, the scheming devil dwells,  
Burns the breast of those who drink it, and sends their souls to Hell.

*Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.*

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## Critical Commentary

Transcription by Peters, p. 196.

### HST notes:

In the Harry Peters series:

*Mr. Faulkner said of the characters in his songs, "I knowed them as well as I knowed anybody, and every word [is] true, mister."*

Alternate titles/related songs: "Rowan County Crew," "Rowan County Trouble."

### Sources:

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K.G.