

Hunters of Kentucky

Words: Samuel Woodworth 1823. Tune: Miss Bailey's Ghost. Credited to George Colman the elder (1732-94) and the younger (1762-1836).

Ye gentlemen and ladies fair who grace this famous city,
Just listen, if you've time to spare, while I rehearse a ditty.
And for the opportunity conceive yourselves quite lucky.
For it's seldom ever that you'll see a hunter from Kentucky.

Oh Kentucky, the hunters of Kentucky!
Oh Kentucky, the hunters of Kentucky!

We are a hardy, free-born race, each man to fear a stranger;
Whate'er the game we join in chase, despoiling time and danger.
And if a daring foe annoys, whate'er his strength and forces,
We'll show him that Kentucky boys are alligator horses.

Oh Kentucky, ...

I s'pose you've read it in the prints, How Pakenham attempted
To make Old Hickory Jackson wince, but soon his scheme repented.
For we, with rifles ready cocked thought such occasion lucky,
And soon around the general flocked the hunters of Kentucky.

Oh Kentucky, ...

You've heard, I s'pose how New Orleans is famed for wealth and beauty.
There's girls of every hue it seems, from snowy white to sooty.
So Pakenham he makes his brags, if he in fight was lucky,
He'd have their girls and cotton bags, in spite of old Kentucky

Oh Kentucky, ...

But Jackson he was wide awake and was not scared at trifles,
For well he knew what aim we'd take with our Kentucky rifles.
He led us down in cypress swamp, the ground was low and mucky.
There stood John Bull in martial pomp, but here was old Kentucky.

Oh Kentucky, ...

A bank was raised to hide our breasts, not that we thought of dying,
But then we always like a rest unless the game is flying.
Behind it stood our little band, not wishing to be greater,
The flower of old Kentucky's land, half horse, half alligator.

Oh Kentucky...

They did not make our patience tire before they showed their faces.
We did not wish to waste our fire, so snugly held our places.
But when so nigh we saw 'em wink, we thought it best to stop 'em
And 'twould have done you good, I think, to see Kentuckians drop 'em

Oh Kentucky, ...

They quickly saw, 'twas vain to fight when lead was all their booty,
And so they wisely took their flight and left us all our beauty.
So now if danger e'er annoys, remember what our trade is.
Just send for us Kentucky boys, and we'll protect ye, ladies.

Oh Kentucky...

As Sung on Judy Cook's CD "Lincoln's America"

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