

Steve Earle "Ben McCulloch"

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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
Well 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

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,
yeah

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

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