

The Miami and Erie Canal

by Russ Franzen

chorus: From Lake Erie down to the Ohio River
 Pulled along by two mules at four miles an hour.
 Bringing commerce and settlers to the Western frontier
 On the Miami and Erie Canal.

We'd been on the canal for two days or three
Going up to Lake Erie from Cincinnati.
We paid three cents a mile for the ride and some eats
While the mules rested midships in their very own suite.

We were told of the navvies who worked with shovels and picks
For thirty cents a day to dig that broad ditch.
They ate corn bread and beans, washed down with some whiskey,
And they lay down to sleep in their small wooden shanties.

They dug that canal, it was forty feet wide,
And cleared out the towpath, ten feet on each side.
There were a hundred-five locks that took the boats up and down
And they were pulled by two mules, who just poked along.

At the Providence lock, local farmers came by
Selling fresh produce for our dinner that night.
At Waterville our boat pulled up to the dock
And we went into Rupp's Canal Store with money to shop.

Just a six-hour ride from Waterville home.
The night has come on and we see the full moon
Shining down on this great Ohio waterway
In our green and white packet on the way to Lake Erie.