



The Grip - Cary Depew

The grip I use at the railroad,
 the one my father used to own.
 Never gave it much thought as a child,
 and even less once I was grown.
 Carrying his things back and forth,
 Dad would unconsciously rely.
 It was safe to say that in my short life,
 that old grip has seen more than I.
 It's place at home was a closet,
 never given much credit at all -
 But there it sat, quiet and full,
 ready each time for the call.
 When my father retired, so did his grip,
 until the next generation had come -
 and like so many bits of wisdom,
 He passed it along to his son.
 The passing of years can be seen,
 those tired zippers, ragged not new.
 A strong sturdy bag that traveled so well,
 now old weathered and blue.
 Most would not give it a glance
 just as I wouldn't when I was nine -
 but now I look and I see a life,
 that once was my Dad's, now mine.



These poems reflect the paradox that we as railroaders feel. A pride of employment in a very historical industry and a hardship that comes with always being on the move, in-between two points, home and work, trying to raise a family from the rails. Railroading gets in your blood, for some it is a family tradition.



Nashville Bound

S. Fentress & J. Wright

I got a 2-hour call for a train at 3
 Nashville bound is where I'll be,
 walk in the bedroom that's where they lay
 5 ,3 , and 1 on the way.
 Ready to go and grips are packed -
 12 hours down and 12 hours back.
 Laid up in a hotel till the next day -
 to waste another 12 hours away.
 Sun, sleet, snow, or rain
 You bet you find me on a train -
 workin' my days away
 carrying a picture to ease the pain.
 Days go by and holidays pass
 watchin' my kids and they grow up fast -
 livin' a hard life on the road,
 never knowing when I have to go.
 Daddy will you be here when i wake up
 as i open the door his head pops up -
 no, the railroad called and i have to go -
 I love you see you when i get home.

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