ANONYMOUS (1100-1945)
The Red River Valley

E **B7** **E**
From this valley they say you are going,
B7
We will miss your bright eyes and sweet smile,
E **E7** **A**
For they say you are taking the sunshine
E **B7** **E**
That brightens our pathway a while

E **B7** **E**
Come and sit by my side if you love me,
B7
Do not hasten to bid me adieu,
E **E7** **A**
But remember the Red River Valley
E **B7** **E**
And the girl that has loved you so true.

For a long time / I have been / waiting
For those dear words you never would / say,
But at / last all my / fond hopes have / vanished,
For they / say you are / going a/way.

Won't you think of the / valley you're / leaving?
Oh how lonely, how sad it will / be.
Oh / think of the / fond heart you're / breaking,
And the / grief you are / causing me to / see?

From this valley they / say you are / going;
When you go, may your darling go / too?
Would you / leave her be/hind unpro/tected
When she / loves no / other but / you?

I have promised you, / darling, that / never
Will a word from my lips cause you / pain;
And my / life, -- it will / be yours for/ever
If you / only will / love me a/gain.

Must the past with its / joys be / blighted
By the future of sorrow and / pain,
And the / vows that were / spoken be / slighted?
Don't you / think you can / love me a/gain?

As you go to your / home by the / ocean,
May you never forget those sweet / hours,
That we / spent in / Red River / Valley,
And the / love we exchanged / 'mid the /
flowers.

There never could / be such a / longing
In the heart of a pure maiden's / breast,
That / dwells in the / heart you are / breaking
As I / wait in my / home in the / West.

And the dark maiden's / prayer for her / lover
To the Spirit that rules o'r the / world;
May his / pathway be / ever in / sunshine,
Is the / prayer of the / Red River / girl.

Come and sit by my / side if you / love me,
Do not hasten to bid me a/dieu,
But re/member the / Red River / Valley
And the / girl that has / loved you so / true.

Red River Valley is a folk song often sung by the Sons of the Pioneers. It was widely believed to be a Texas re-working of a popular American song of 1896, "In the Bright Mohawk Valley." However, research has found that it was known in at least five Canadian provinces before then. This finding indicates that it may have been composed at the time of the Wolseley expedition to the northern Red River Valley in Manitoba, and depicts the sorrow of a local Metis woman as her soldier lover prepares to return to Ontario.

In 1870 British Deputy Quartermaster-General, Garnet Wolseley, successfully commanded the Red River expedition to put down the Red River Rebellion and establish Canadian sovereignty over the Northwest Territories and Manitoba. Manitoba had entered Canadian Confederation as the result of negotiations between Canada and a provisional Métis government headed by Louis Riel.

Louis Riel was a Canadian politician, a founder of the province of Manitoba, and leader of the Métis people of the Canadian prairies. He led two resistance movements against the Canadian government that sought to preserve Métis rights and culture as their homelands in the Northwest Territories came progressively under the Canadian sphere of influence.

The first such resistance was the Red River Rebellion of 1869–1870. The provisional government established by Riel ultimately negotiated the terms under which the modern province of Manitoba entered the Canadian Confederation. Riel was forced into exile in the United States, but he is frequently referred to as the "Father of Manitoba."

http://www.plainsfolk.com/songs/song4.htm