

Song of the Kansas Emigrant Whittaker traditional

I love this song. The CD (KS - Where the West Begins) has a good explanation of it. It was printed in 1854, so probably written a little before that, as abolitionists were planning settlement of Kansas. I first found the words in a KS history book from the local library - and I put the tune to the song. Later, I found the song on the internet, and supposedly the tune should be Auld Lang Syne. Sorry, I like my tune better, so recorded it just that way. I made no changes to the lyrics, and you'll note the "older" way of talking in this song.

We cross the prairies as of old, the Pilgrims crossed the sea
To make the west as they the east, the homestead of the free

We go to rear a wall of men, on Freedom's southern line
And plant beside the cotton tree, the rugged northern pine

We're flowin from our native hills, as our free rivers flow
The blessings of our Mother land, is on us as we go

The homestead of the free my boys, the homestead of the free
To make the west, as they the east, the homestead of the free

We go to plant the common schools on distant prairie swells
And give the Sabbaths of the wild, the music of her bells

Up-bearing like the ark of old, the Bible in her van
We go to test the truth of God, against the fraud of man

No pause, nor rest, save where the streams that feed the Kansas run
Save where our pilgrim gonfalon, shall flout the setting sun

We'll tread the prairies as of old, our fathers sailed the sea
And make the west, as they the east, the homestead of the free

Repeat Chorus