

# The Ballad of Amos Kendall

(to the tune of Davy Crockett)

Lyrics by Michael Turney

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C Up in New England when the F nation was C young  
Amos was born as G a farmer's son.  
C His pa said learning was F a great G tool  
And insisted that Amos go to C school.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, what will he G grow to C be?

C The lending library gave him F lots to C read;  
Helped to meet his ed- G u-ca-tion needs.  
C It wasn't enough; he still F craved G knowledge,  
Went off and worked his way through C college.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, a Dartmouth G grad-u- C ate.

C Despite his strong spirit and F forceful C thought,  
Of physical strength G Amos had nought.  
C Skinny and pale, he was F oft-times G ill  
And his hands shook as if he were C chilled.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, a hy-po- G chon-dri- C ac.

C After grad-u-at-ing he F thought it C best  
 To gather his things G and move out West.  
 C Way out there was less com- pet-i- G tion.  
 Much better hope of a good pos- C i- tion.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, hoping to G find suc- C cess.

C Traveled by flat boat and F stagecoach, C too.  
 Walked a lot before G he was through.  
 C It took many months but he F was pluc- G ky  
 Made it all the way down to Kentuc- C ky.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, on the west- G ern fron- C tier.

C Teaching and tutoring his F bills to C pay,  
 Taken in by a fami- G ly named Clay.  
 C Henry Clay was important F in these G parts,  
 Knowing this family gave Amos his C start.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, meeting im- G port-ant C folks.

C He lived at Ashland to teach F Clay's child- C ren  
 And read the law books G in Henry's den.  
 C He passed the bar for the F Common- G wealth,  
 Then moved to Georgetown seeking C wealth.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, trying to G practice C law.

C Wasn't long `til he had a F change of C heart  
Decided to make a G newspaper start.

C The Georgetown Patriot F was its G name  
And Amos loved the editing C game.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, writin' and G printin' C news.

C When Kentucky politics F got very C tense  
Amos' newspaper G helped it make sense.

C His forceful pen and press F had pow-G er;  
His editorial voice really flow-C ered.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, speaking out G forceful-C ly.

C Frankfort was home to another pub-F li-ca- C tion  
Serving much of the G western nation.

C Called the Argus and F widely G read,  
Amos was asked to be its C head  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, gaining a G stronger C voice.

C After Amos moved he met F his sweet C Mary.  
Wasn't long until G they did marry.

C Four little Kendalls soon F did fol- G low.  
Then her sudden death left him hol- C low.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, a grieving G widow- C er.

C Just a few years later he F met Miss C Jane,  
 A teen-age lass who G eased his pain,  
 C They were soon wed and their F family G grew.  
 In a short while, he had quite a C crew.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, father of G fourteen C kids.

C ` Bout this time Andy Jackson F came a- C long  
 Saying government G was going wrong.  
 C Amos agreed so he F pitched right G in,  
 And helped the General's White House C win.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, backing the G presi- C dent.

C After the election he went F to D. C C.  
 And got a job with G the Treas-ur-y\_\_  
 C Fourth Auditor is what F he be- G came  
 When he gave up the newspaper C game  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, a Washington G bur-eau- C crat.

C Balancing budgets and man- F aging C spendin'  
 Many would think G is never-ending  
 C But, not content doing F just these G tasks  
 Amos would do whatever Jackson C asked  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, serving the G pres-i- C dent.

C When Jackson brought down the F U. S. C Bank  
Amos was there in G the very first rank.

C He recruited banks through- F out the G land  
Lining up those who would make a C stand  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, stopping the G national C bank.

C When problems arose in the F postal C service,  
President Jackson G didn't get nervous.

C Postmaster general A- F mos be- G came,  
And Barry's mess quickly C tamed.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, Jackson's G fix-it C man.

C Amos wrote speeches and draft- F ed big C plans;  
Was primary aide to G the grand old man.

C He helped in shaping Jack- F sonian G views  
And, at the same time, often made C news.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, speakin' for the G pres-i- C dent.

C Launching the Globe was another F major C test,  
One of those things A- G mos did the best.

C Jackson's praise this pa- F per did G sing,  
Set him apart from the Calhoun C ring.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, facin' intra- G par-ty C strife.

C Some say he was a press F sec-re- C tary.  
 I don't think he was G that ord-in-ary.  
 C With his influence, pow- F er and G say,  
 Government policy he could C sway.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, advising the G pres-i- C dent.

C For years and years Amos F used his C clout;  
 Of his influence, G there is no doubt.

C Though some disliked this e- F litist smar- G ty,  
 He helped build the Democratic C Party  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, political G organ- C izer.

C Martin Van Buren was the F next in C line;  
 Amos expected G him to do fine.

C Helped Van Buren win his F elec- G tion  
 And thus kept his White House connec- C tion.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, serving a new G pres-i- C dent.

C By eighteen-forty A- F mos had C enough;  
 Advising presi- G dents was too tough.

C Needed money for his F fam-i- G ly  
 And he was worn out phys-i-cal- C ly.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, lookin' to G make a C change.

C He left the White House and post F office, C too,  
 Not really knowin' G what he would do.  
 C Tried another newspaper F for a G spell;  
 Didn't work out terribly C well.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, seeking a G better C path.

C Amos had encountered a man F named C Morse,  
 Founder of the tele- G graph, of course.  
 C Morse's invention just F wouldn't G pay,  
 `Til Amos helped him find the best C way.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, managing a G business C now.

C He got rich making tele- F graph ex- C pand  
 Sending its message G across the land.  
 C Then he decided to F spread his G wealth,  
 Gave to churches and those in ill C health.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, elder-ly phil- G an-thro- C pist.

C One contribution still F ex-ists- C day,  
 Helps deaf folks in a G marvellous way.  
 C With Gallaudet, he founded F a col- G lege  
 Where hearing-impaired acquire know- C ledge.  
 Amos, F Amos C Kendall, promotin' G learning C for all.

C A wealthy old man with im- F port-ant C friends,  
Amos spoke his mind G on current trends.

C Civil war loomed, states set F to se- G cede;  
Amos wrote that they ought not pro- C ceed.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, defending the G U. S. C A.

C He loved the Union, but not F Mr. Linc- C oln.  
Thought we were on the G verge of sinkin'.

C Wished Andy Jackson was F still in G town  
So he could knock the rebellion C down.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, worried a- G bout the C future.

C Amos and the country came F through the C war,  
The Union saved and G united once more.

C Alas, though Amos sur- F vived the G strife,  
Disease had claimed his second C wife.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, grief-stricken G once a- C gain.

C From humble beginnings he climbed F the tow- C er;  
From print shop to G the seat of power.

C Sat in the cabinet, advised F pres-i- G dents,  
Then laid out where the telegraph C went.  
Amos, F Amos C Kendall, lived the G American C dream.

C Amos passed away in eighteen- F sixty- C nine,  
Fi-nal-ly at the G end of the line.

C Today most folks don't even F know his G name,  
That is truly a terrible C shame.

Amos, F Amos C Kendall, for-got-ten G A-meri- C can