

Frances Lee

*River run down from the mountain, and the river run down to the sea
River run down through the flatland towns where the riverboat men spend their money
free
River run wide and the river run deep and the river run old as time
And the river run cold as the cold, cold heart of that pretty little girl of mine*

When I landed on the river back in 1845
It was all a roustabout could do to keep himself alive
Hard work and harder liquor was the life that came to me
Till the day that I first laid my eyes on pretty Frances Lee

Chorus

Now Frances Lee was the prettiest girl that ever I had seen
Her cheeks were red, her hair was brown, her shining eyes were green
I met her on a Saturday night, I kissed her on a Sunday
And damn me if I wasn't just a lovesick fool by Monday

Chorus

I courted pretty Frances Lee, I courted night and day
I bought her wine and dresses fine whenever I got my pay
She promised for to marry when I got back on shore
And in that town I'd settle down and work on the river no more

Chorus

On the day that I returned to take her for my bride
I'd bought me a fine suit of clothes and a golden ring besides
I opened up my true love's door with a shaking and trembling hand
And I found my true love in the arms of a low-down gambling man

Chorus

So it's goodbye to you, Frances Lee, goodbye forevermore
I'm going back on the river, and I ain't coming back no more
You left me with a broken heart and a troubled, worried mind
And I'm gonna ride these riverboats until the day I die

Composed by: Alex Sturbaum

Appears on *River Run Wide*

I've always loved riverboat songs, and this one sprung fully formed from my head one day. I often play it with an original tune called Machias Cutoff.