

SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS RECORDINGS

ANTHOLOGY OF  
**AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC**

EDITED BY HARRY SMITH

EIGHTY-FOUR SELECTIONS  ON SIX COMPACT DISCS

University of Alberta Library



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# AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC

## SELECTIONS IN THIS ALBUM

1. HENRY LEE
2. FATAL FLOWER GARDEN
3. HOUSE CARPENTER
4. DRUNKARDS SPECIAL
5. OLD LADY AND DEVIL
6. THE BUTCHER BOY
7. THE WAGONERS LAD
8. KING KONG KITCHIE
9. SHOES AND LEGGINS
10. WILLIE MOORE
11. LAZY FARMER BOY
12. PEG AND AWL
13. OMMIE WISE
14. JOHN JOHANNA
15. COLE YOUNGER
16. CHARLES GITEAU
17. JOHN HARDY
18. JOHN HENRY
19. STACKALEE
20. WHITE HOUSE BLUES
21. FRANKIE
22. THE TITANIC
23. ENGINE 143
24. KASSIE JONES
25. PENNYS FARM
26. BOWEAVIL BLUES
27. FARM LAND BLUES

## ARTISTS IN THIS ALBUM

1. DICK JUSTICE
2. NELSTONE'S HAWAIIANS
3. CLARENCE ASHLEY
4. COLEY JONES
5. BILL & BELLE REED
6. BUELL KAZEE
7. BUELL KAZEE
8. "CHUBBY" PARKER
9. UNCLE ECK DUNFORD
10. BURNETT & RUTHERFORD
11. CARTER & YOUNG
12. CAROLINA TAR HEELS
13. G. B. GRAYSON
14. KELLY HARRELL
15. EDWARD L. CRAIN
16. KELLY HARRELL
17. THE CARTER FAMILY
18. WILLIAMSON & CURRY
19. FRANK HUTCHISON
20. POOLE & N. C. RAMBLERS
21. JOHN HURT
22. W. & V. SMITH
23. THE CARTER FAMILY
24. FURRY LEWIS
25. THE BENTLY BOYS
26. THE MASKED MARVEL
27. CAROLINA TAR HEELS

## VOLUME ONE BALLADS

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FP 251

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The above information and selections are for informational purposes only. For more information, please contact Folkways Records, Inc. at 40 Avenue C, New York, N.Y. 10009.

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31. LA DANSEUSE
32. GEORGIA STOMP
33. BRILLIANCY MEDLEY
34. INDIAN WAR WHOOP
35. OLD COUNTRY STOMP
36. OLD DOG BLUE
37. SAUT CRAPAUD
38. ARCADIAN ONE STEP
39. HOME SWEET HOME
40. NEWPORT BLUES
41. MOONSHINERS DANCE
42. BORN AGAIN
43. OH DEATH
44. ROCKY ROAD
45. PRESENT JOYS
46. THIS SONG OF LOVE
47. JUDGEMENT
48. BETTER THINGS
49. LAID MY BURDEN DOWN
50. JOHN THE BAPTIST
51. DRY BONES
52. JOHN THE REVELATOR
53. LITTLE MOSES
54. SHINE ON ME
55. 50 MI. OF ELBOW ROOM
56. IN THE BATTLE FIELD

## VOLUME TWO SOCIAL MUSIC

## ARTISTS IN THIS ALBUM

28. BUNT STEPHENS
29. J. W. DAY
30. A. HUNT'S RAMBLERS
31. D. LACHNEY & GASPARD
32. ANDREW & JIM BAXTER
33. ECK ROBERTSON FAMILY
34. F. MING PEP-STEPPERS
35. HENRY THOMAS
36. JIM JACKSON
37. COLUMBUS FRUGE
38. JOSEPH FALCON
39. BREAUX FRERES
40. CINCINNATI JUG BAND
41. F. CLOUTIER ORCHESTRA
42. REV. J. M. GATES
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44. SACRED HARP SINGERS
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46. GA. SINGING CONVENTION
47. SISTER M. NELSON
48. SANCTIFIED SINGERS
49. MC INTORSH & EDWARDS
50. REV. MOSES MASON
51. BASCOM LUNSFORD
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## SELECTIONS IN THIS ALBUM

57. THE COO COO BIRD
58. EAST VIRGINIA
59. MINGLEWOOD BLUES
60. ONE MORNING IN MAY
61. JAMES ALLEY
62. SUGAR BABY
63. I WISH I WAS A MOLE
64. MOUNTAINEER'S COURTSHIP
65. MERCHANTS DAUGHTER
66. BOB LEE JUNIOR
67. SINGLE GIRL
68. LE VIEUX SOULARD
69. RABBIT FOOT BLUES
70. EXPRESSMAN BLUES
71. POOR BOY BLUES
72. FEATHER BED
73. COUNTRY BLUES
74. 99 YEAR BLUES
75. PRISON CELL BLUES
76. TWO WHITE HORSES
77. C'EST SI TRISTE
78. DOWN PLANK ROAD
79. ROLL DOWN THE LINE
80. SPIKE DRIVER BLUES
81. K. C. MOAN
82. TRAIN ON THE ISLAND
83. LONE STAR TRAIL
84. FISHING BLUES

The entire music collection is available in convenient cassette format for home use. For more information, contact Folkways Records, Dept. 100, 40 Avenue C, New York, N.Y. 10014.

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57. CLARENCE ASHLEY
58. BUELL KAZEE
59. CANNONS JUG STOMPERS
60. DIDIER HERBERT
61. RICHARD BROWN
62. "DOCK" BOGGS
63. BASCOM LUNSFORD
64. MR. & MRS. STONEMAN
65. STONEMAN FAMILY
66. MEMPHIS JUG BAND
67. THE CARTER FAMILY
68. C. BREAUX & J. FALCON
69. BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON
70. JOHN ESTES
71. RAMBLIN' THOMAS
72. CANNON'S JUG STOMPERS
73. "DOCK" BOGGS
74. JULIUS DANIELS
75. BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON
76. BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON
77. C. & O. BREAUX & FALCON
78. UNCLE DAVE MACON
79. UNCLE DAVE MACON
80. JOHN HURT
81. MEMPHIS JUG BAND
82. J. P. NESTOR
83. KEN MAYNARD
84. HENRY THOMAS

## VOLUME THREE SONGS

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FOLKWAYS RECORDS & SERVICE CORP., N. Y.



A BOOKLET  
OF  
ESSAYS, APPRECIATIONS, AND ANNOTATIONS  
PERTAINING TO THE  
ANTHOLOGY OF  
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This reissue of the *Anthology of American Folk Music* is dedicated to the vision of Ralph Rinzler (1934-1994) and to his memory.

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# Introduction

Anthony Seeger, Curator and Director, and  
Amy Horowitz, Deputy Director,  
Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

FROM THE DAY the Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways Records in 1986 we knew we wanted to reissue the landmark *Anthology of American Folk Music*, widely known as the Harry Smith Anthology, on CD. Ralph Rinzler, who as Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian was largely responsible for the acquisition of Folkways, had himself been profoundly influenced by the *Anthology* when it was first released. After hearing the *Anthology* in the 1950s, he and fellow musicians Eugene Earle, John Cohen, Mike Seeger, and others began to search out the performers on those early commercial recordings and uncovered rich and enduring traditions of regional music in the United States.

Ralph Rinzler always thought that the effectiveness of the *Anthology* derived from Harry Smith's genius for bringing together absolutely outstanding performances in an entrancing sequence. The LP medium was fairly new in 1952, when the *Anthology* was

first released. The LP (33  $\frac{1}{3}$  RPM 12" disc) made it possible to assemble a long, unbroken sequence of songs together; before this, a single song per side was the standard. Harry Smith used the new technology to great advantage. The compact disc extended the advantage of the LP, and Ralph wanted very much to release the *Anthology* on the new medium. Further advances in technology permit us to present the *Anthology* in an Enhanced CD format, providing a multimedia, hypertext essay of images, text, and additional audio.

This reissue of the 1952 *Anthology of American Folk Music* maintains the breadth and focus of Harry Smith's vision, supplementing his original *Anthology* with printed essays, photographs, video clips, and audio samples that will help a new generation of listeners understand just how important his work has been. We are grateful for the collaboration of contemporary writers and musicians and for their commentary on the original *Anthology's* intentions, its collected performances, and its impact.

This new release stands on Harry Smith's shoulders at the boundaries of science and art, history and aesthetics, scholarship and commerce. We hope your experience with this *Anthology* will be as profound as that of previous generations, and we encourage you to use this as the beginning of a voyage of musical discovery—personal, spiritual, intellectual, academic, or in whatever direction your experience takes you. Like Ralph Rinzler's Smithsonian Folklife Festivals and Folkways Records itself, this *Anthology* is meant to be a small step toward changing the world—beginning by changing those who experience it.

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**VOLUME ONE: BALLADS**

1	Henry Lee	Dick Justice
2	Fatal Flower Garden	Nelstone's Hawaiians
3	The House Carpenter	Clarence Ashley
4	Drunkard's Special	Coley Jones
5	Old Lady and the Devil	Bill and Belle Reed
6	The Butcher's Boy	Buell Kazee
7	The Wagoner's Lad	Buell Kazee
8	King Kong Kitchie Kitchie Ki-Me-O	Chubby Parker
9	Old Shoes and Leggins	Uncle Eck Dunford
10	Willie Moore	Richard Burnett and Leonard Rutherford
11	A Lazy Farmer Boy	Buster Carter and Preston Young
12	Peg and Awl	The Carolina Tar Heels
13	Ommie Wise	G. B. Grayson
14	My Name is John Johanna	Kelly Harrell
15	Bandit Cole Younger	Edward L. Crain
16	Charles Giteau	Kelly Harrell
17	John Hardy Was a Desperate Little Man	The Carter Family
18	Gonna Die with my Hammer in My Hand	The Williamson Brothers and Curry
19	Stackalee	Frank Hutchison
20	White House Blues	Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers
21	Frankie	Mississippi John Hurt
22	When That Great Ship Went Down	William and Versey Smith
23	Engine 143	The Carter Family
24	Kassie Jones	Furry Lewis
25	Down on Penny's Farm	The Bently Boys
26	Mississippi Boweavil Blues	The Masked Marvel
27	Got the Farm Land Blues	The Carolina Tar Heels

**VOLUME TWO: SOCIAL MUSIC**

28	Sail Away Lady	Uncle Bunt Stephens
29	The Wild Wagoner	Jilson Setters
30	Wake Up Jacob	Prince Albert Hunt's Texas Ramblers
31	La Danseuse	Delma Lachney and Blind Uncle Gaspard
32	Georgia Stomp	Andrew and Jim Baxter
33	Brilliancy Medley	Eck Robertson
34	Indian War Whoop	Hoyt Ming & his Pep-Steppers
35	Old Country Stomp	Henry Thomas
36	Old Dog Blue	Jim Jackson
37	Saut Crapaud	Columbus Fruge
38	Acadian One-Step	Joseph Falcon
39	Home Sweet Home	The Breaux Freres
40	Newport Blues	The Cincinnati Jug Band
41	Moonshiner's Dance Part One	Frank Cloutier and the Victoria Cafe Orchestra
42	Must Be Born Again	Rev. J.M. Gates
43	Oh Death Where Is Thy Sting	Rev. J.M. Gates
44	Rocky Road	Alabama Sacred Harp Singers
45	Present Joys	Alabama Sacred Harp Singers
46	This Song of Love	The Middle Georgia Singing Convention No. 1
47	Judgement	Sister Mary Nelson
48	He Got Better Things for You	Memphis Sanctified Singers
49	Since I Laid My Burden Down	The Elders McIntorsh & Edwards' Sanctified Singers
50	John the Baptist	Rev. Moses Mason
51	Dry Bones	Bascom Lamar Lunsford
52	John the Revelator	Blind Willie Johnson
53	Little Moses	The Carter Family
54	Shine on Me	Ernest Phipps and His Holiness Singers
55	Fifty Miles of Elbow Room	Rev. F.W. McGee
56	I'm in the Battlefield for My Lord	Rev. D.C. Rice and His Sanctified Congregation

**VOLUME THREE: SONGS**

57	The Coo Coo Bird	Clarence Ashley
58	East Virginia	Buell Kazee
59	Minglewood Blues	Cannon's Jug Stompers
60	I Woke Up One Morning in May	Didier Hébert
61	James Alley Blues	Richard "Rabbit" Brown
62	Sugar Baby	Dock Boggs
63	I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground	Bascom Lamar Lunsford
64	Mountaineer's Courtship	Ernest and Hattie Stoneman
65	The Spanish Merchant's Daughter	The Stoneman Family
66	Bob Lee Junior Blues	The Memphis Jug Band
67	Single Girl, Married Girl	The Carter Family
68	Le Vieux Soulard et Sa Femme	Cleoma Breaux and Joseph Falcon
69	Rabbit Foot Blues	Blind Lemon Jefferson
70	Expressman Blues	Sleepy John Estes and Yank Rachell
71	Poor Boy Blues	Ramblin' Thomas
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The whole bizarre package made the familiar strange, the never known into the forgotten, and the forgotten into a collective memory that teased any single listener's conscious mind.


# The Old, Weird America

Greil Marcus

THE ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC was a work produced by a twenty-nine-year-old man of no fixed address named Harry Smith. Issued in 1952 on Folkways Records of New York City—as an elaborate, dubiously legal bootleg, a compendium of recordings originally released on and generally long-forgotten by such still-active labels as Columbia, Paramount, Brunswick, and Victor—it was the founding document of the American folk revival. “It gave us contact with musicians and cultures we wouldn’t have known existed,” John Cohen of the New Lost City Ramblers, an archivist guitar-fiddle-and-banjo band that formed in 1959, recalled in 1995 at a gathering to mark the fourth anniversary of Smith’s death. The *Anthology* introduced Cohen and hundreds, then thousands of others to performers from the 1920s and ’30s—artists, Cohen said, “who became like mystical gods to us.” The “*Anthology* was our bible,” singer Dave Van Ronk wrote in 1991 of the Greenwich Village folk milieu in the mid-fifties. “We all knew every word of every song on it, including the ones we hated. They say that in the

19th-century British Parliament, when a member would begin to quote a classical author in Latin the entire House would rise in a body and finish the quote along with him. It was like that.”

It was no accident that the *Anthology* was issued in 1952, at the height of the McCarthyist witch-hunt. It was not irony that led Smith, near the end of his life, as a shaman in residence at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, to record every sound he encountered in the course of a fourth of July, from speech to fireworks to crickets. In 1952, with the United States at war with Korea and resurgent at home, a world power and the envy of the world, seemingly complete and finished, Smith made his own country.

That was Smith’s *Anthology*. It was a collection of eighty-four performances on six LPs in three hinged two-record sets—contraptions (soon replaced by boxes) that suggest less a likely mechanism for the delivery of recorded music than a cryptic homage to a lapsed patent that, dating to some time before the First World War, understandably failed to catch on. Each set carried the same cover art, in blue (air), red (fire), and green (water); from a Robert Fludd compendium on mysticism, Smith used an etching by one 



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# The Old, Weird America

Greil Marcus

THE ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC was a work produced by a twenty-nine-year-old man of no fixed address named Harry Smith. Issued in 1952 on Folkways Records of New York City—as an elaborate, dubiously legal bootleg, a compendium of recordings originally released on and generally long-forgotten by such still-active labels as Columbia, Paramount, Brunswick, and Victor—it was the founding document of the American folk revival. “It gave us contact with musicians and cultures we wouldn’t have known existed,” John Cohen of the New Lost City Ramblers, an archivist guitar-fiddle-and-banjo band that formed in 1959, recalled in 1995 at a gathering to mark the fourth anniversary of Smith’s death. The *Anthology* introduced Cohen and hundreds, then thousands of others to performers from the 1920s and ’30s—artists, Cohen said, “who became like mystical gods to us.” The “*Anthology* was our bible,” singer Dave Van Ronk wrote in 1991 of the Greenwich Village folk milieu in the mid-fifties. “We all knew every word of every song on it, including the ones we hated. They say that in the

19th-century British Parliament, when a member would begin to quote a classical author in Latin the entire House would rise in a body and finish the quote along with him. It was like that.”

It was no accident that the *Anthology* was issued in 1952, at the height of the McCarthyist witch-hunt. It was not irony that led Smith, near the end of his life, as a shaman in residence at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, to record every sound he encountered in the course of a fourth of July, from speech to fireworks to crickets. In 1952, with the United States at war with Korea and resurgent at home, a world power and the envy of the world, seemingly complete and finished, Smith made his own country.

That was Smith’s *Anthology*. It was a collection of eighty-four performances on six LPs in three hinged two-record sets—contraptions (soon replaced by boxes) that suggest less a likely mechanism for the delivery of recorded music than a cryptic homage to a lapsed patent that, dating to some time before the First World War, understandably failed to catch on. Each set carried the same cover art, in blue (air), red (fire), and green (water); from a Robert Fludd compendium on mysticism, Smith used an etching by one 



SELECTIONS 3, 57 Clarence Ashley

COURTESY SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS ARCHIVES

Theodore de Bry of what Smith called “the Celestial Monochord.” Dating back to at least 400 B.C., said to have been invented by Pythagoras, the monochord was a protean instrument, a simple sounding box with a single string, not dissimilar from the diddley bow of the Black American South, a piece of wire strung against a wall from floor to ceiling. The monochord was used for tuning and as a timer until the late nineteenth century; five hundred years earlier the word had entered the English language as a synonym

for harmony, agreement—for the “acorde,” the poet John Lyngate wrote in 1420, between “Reason & Sensualyte.”

On the covers of the *Anthology* volumes the monochord was shown being tuned by the hand of God. It divided creation into balanced spheres of energy, into fundamentals; printed over the filaments of the etching and its crepuscular Latin explanations were record titles and the names of the blues singers, hillbilly musicians, and gospel chanters Smith was bringing together for the first time. It was as if they had something to do with each other: as if Pythagoras, Fludd, and the likes of Jilson Setters, Ramblin’ Thomas, the Alabama Sacred Harp Singers, Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers, and Smith himself, were calling on the same gods.\* [SEE ENDNOTE ON PAGE TWENTY-FIVE]

Smith’s twenty-eight-page accompanying booklet was just as unlikely. Visually it was dominated by a queer schema: heavy, black, oversized numbers, marking each of the 84 selections as if their placement altogether superseded their content, as if some grand system lurked within the elements Smith had brought to bear upon each other. The booklet was decorated with art from record sleeves advertising “Old Time Tunes” (music that as first recorded in the 1920s was already old, even on the verge of disappearance, and sold and experienced as such), with woodcuts from turn-of-the-century catalogues of musical instruments, and with faded, hard-to-make-out photos of performers. In 1952 fiddler Eck Dunford, blues guitarist Furry Lewis, the Eck Robertson and Family string band, bluesman Blind Lemon Jefferson, and Cannon’s Jug Stompers were only twenty or twenty-five years out of their time; cut off by the cataclysms of the Great Depression and the Second World War and by a national narrative that had never included their kind, they appeared now like visitors from another world, like passengers on a ship that had drifted into the sea of the unwritten. “All those guys on that Harry Smith *Anthology* were dead,” Cambridge folkies Eric von Schmidt and Jim Rooney wrote in 1979, recalling how it seemed in the early 1960s, when most of Smith’s avatars were very much alive. “*Had* to be.”

Smith’s notes were solemn jokes. Information for each recording as to performer, composer, label, master number, date of release, and so on was given precisely; comments on the sourcing or transmission of a piece followed in sober manner; and each song and bal-



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lad, hymn and sermon, was reduced to pidgin summary or newspaper headline, the latter running from screaming newsbreak (“JOHN HARDY HELD WITHOUT BAIL AFTER GUNPLAY...WIFE AT SCAFFOLD”) to charming human-interest filler (“ZOOLOGIC MISOGYNY ACHIEVED IN MOUSE-FROG NUPTIALS, RELATIVES APPROVE” for a version of “Froggy Went A-Courtin”). Again in 1995, John Cohen:

Here’s “The Butcher’s Boy”: “FATHER FINDS DAUGHTER’S BODY WITH NOTE ATTACHED WHEN RAILROAD BOY MISTREATS HER.” Here’s another song: “WIFE AND MOTHER FOLLOWS CARPENTER TO SEA; MOURNS BABE AS SHIP GOES DOWN.” “GAUDY WOMAN LURES CHILD FROM PLAYFELLOWS; STABS HIM AS VICTIM DICTATES MESSAGE TO PARENTS.” Now, I think it’s terrific—it seems forceful and crazy and comical—but if you ever looked at the serious folklorists, [at what] they’ve written, these are the *Child ballads*, these are the *major tomes*, these are handed down from medieval times to ancient Britain, they’re the great traditional ballads, and there’s volumes and volumes of scholarship about them—and that Harry could get them down to one-liners is—unnerving.

THE WHOLE BIZARRE PACKAGE made the familiar strange, the never known into the forgotten, and the forgotten into a collective memory that teased any single listener’s conscious mind. There was, remembers the artist Bruce Conner, who encountered the *Anthology* in the early 1950s in the Wichita Public Library, “a confrontation with another culture, or another view of the world, that might include arcane, or unknown, or unfamiliar views of the world, hidden within these words, melodies, and harmonies—it was like field recordings, from the Amazon, or Africa, but it’s here, in the United States! It’s not conspicuous, but it’s *there*. In Kansas, this was fascinating. I was sure something was going on in the country besides Wichita mind control.” As a document carrying such faraway suggestions, the *Anthology of American Folk Music* was a seductive detour away from what, in the 1950s, was known not as America but as Americanism. That meant the consumer society, as advertised on TV; it meant vigilance against all enemies of such a society, and a determination never to appear as one; it meant what Norman Mailer, in words that in the 1950s could have been those of many other people, described as the state of mind of the republic: the coexistence of the fear of “instant death by atomic war” and the fear of “a slow death by conformity with every creative instinct



## SELECTION 9

## The Bogtrotters Band

Eck Dunford, top row, second from right

COURTESY MIKE SEEGER COLLECTION AND FIELDS WARD

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As a mystery, though, the *Anthology* was disguised as a text book; it was an occult document disguised as an academic treatise on stylistic shifts within an archaic musicology. This was in Harry Smith’s grain. A polymath and an autodidact, a dope fiend and an alcoholic, a legendary experimental filmmaker and a more legendary sponger, he was perhaps most notorious as a fabulist.

Despite the many unbelievable stories Smith told about himself, there were facts in his life. He was born in 1923 in Portland, Oregon, and grew up in and around Seattle; he died in 1991 in New York City, where he had become known as “the Paracelsus of the Chelsea Hotel.” Smith’s parents were Theosophists; when he was a child, Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant (“She had already been people like Christ and Leonardo,” Smith said), and Bishop Leadbeater, dead or alive, were almost like family friends. Smith’s great-grandfather John Corson Smith, who Smith claimed had been aide-de-camp to Ulysses S. Grant during the Civil War and later governor of Illinois, was one of many nineteenth-century mystics to refound the Knights Templar, the medieval order of crusader

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Smith's upbringing was a garden of confusions. His mother's family, he recalled, had left Sioux City, Iowa, in the 1880s "because they felt it was becoming too contaminated by the Industrial Revolution"; his mother's mother founded a school in Alaska "that was supported by the Czarina of Russia," which led to his mother's sometime insistence that she was Anastasia, the last of the Romanovs. His father was once a cowboy and later worked in the

Washington salmon fisheries—unless his father was, as Smith often said, the English satanist Aleister Crowley, whose motto "Do As Thy Wilt Shall Be The Whole Of The Law" was one more of Smith's *Anthology* epigraphs.

Smith developed rickets, which left him stunted and humped. "The universal hatred I've stirred up against myself, it comes from being sloppy among a bunch of tidy people," he said near the end of his life—despite his common appearance as a derelict, he was speaking philosophically. By tidy people he meant certain circles of his parents' friends, followers of "the Transcendental philosophy that Emerson developed...[who] came to Concord to learn," but his own family "prided itself on its backwardness. You see, even when they had James Whitcomb Riley to listen to they still preferred Chaucer."

As a schoolboy, swirling in the irregular orbits of his parents' religion, their fantasies, their poverty and delusions of grandeur, Smith discovered the local Indian tribes. Living near Seattle in South Bellingham, he began to investigate the rituals, music, and languages of the Nootka, the Kwakiutl, the Lummi.

A 1941 photo in *The American Magazine* shows a teenage Smith—with glasses, Pendleton shirt, and a look of calm concentration on his face as he sits before the feathered and horned elders of the Lummi tribe—"recording the drums and chants of the Lummi's annual potlatch, or winter festival... Closest to the aboriginal form of any Indian dance in the U.S." "He hopes to study anthropology under University of Washington profs." the article titled "Injuner" concluded, "and they are hoping to study anthropology under him."

JOHN FAHEY, April 1997:

"Had he never done anything with his life but this *Anthology*, Harry Smith would still have borne the mark of genius across his forehead. I'd match the *Anthology* up against any other single compendium of important information ever assembled. Dead Sea Scrolls? Nah. I'll take the *Anthology*. Make no mistake: there was no 'folk' canon before Smith's work. That he had compiled such a definitive document only became apparent much later, of course. We record-collecting types, sifting through many more records than he did, eventually reached the same conclusions: these were the true goods.

But why is this the 'folk'? Scholars who write such things have said that the 'folk' is the culture of a group of people who're at least to some extent isolated—whether by class, sex, age, race, language, space, time, religion—from the mainstream. Folk song developed as the common currency in this climate of comparative isolation, deriving from a way of life, and blah blah blah. This is true, no doubt; but why did Smith pick this particular grouping as representative of 'folk' music and why was he so dead-bang right in damn near every selection? There were certainly other traditions to be found within 'American' music of the 'unschooled' variety: why are there no Jewish-American motifs? What about the Conjunto? (These were, instead, 'ethnic musics.')

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A turning point in Smith's life came about two years later, when he left his studies at the university and traveled to San Francisco. There and in Berkeley he entered bohemian circles. Already at work on abstract, hand-painted films, he met artists, poets, communists, folk singers, and folklorists. Writing in 1994 of that time and that milieu in *Utopia and Dissent: Art, Poetry, and Politics in California*, Richard Cándida Smith could be describing the auras of Smith's *Anthology*:

The avant-garde on the West Coast had a preference for cosmological-theosophical over psychological-sociological understandings of art and the individual's relationship to larger forces. The sacred, which need not involve a personalized deity, was valued over the profane... Historical "facts" served hierarchy, while tradition was liberating because it grew from a voluntary personal response to the repertory of the past.

I LIKE THAT PHRASE, "the repertory of the past." I like Cándida Smith's description of response to it. Harry Smith might have as well. He drew on both his haunt-ridden boyhood and his own vast collection of 78s to assemble his *Anthology*—a collection that began around 1940, when Smith bought a record by the Mississippi bluesman Tommy McClennan. "[It] had somehow gotten into this town by mistake," Smith said of South Bellingham, speaking to John Cohen in New York in 1968. "It sounded strange so I looked for others." In a Seattle Salvation Army shop he heard Uncle Dave Macon's "Fox and Hounds": "I couldn't imagine what it was." Carl Sandburg's *American Songbag* took him to Child ballads, so named for—and



SELECTIONS 12, 27 : Doc Walsh of the Carolina Tar Heels, 1961

BY JOHN COHEN

famously numbered by—the Harvard English professor whose 1882-1896 *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* catalogued a legacy that by the 1920s persisted more readily in the southern Appalachians than in the British Isles. Other books and directories took him to Southern fiddle music, Cajun chansons tristes, cowboy laments. The war was a boon: warehouses were cleared for military supply, putting thousands of forgotten discs from the 1920s and '30s on sale for next to nothing. Smith found scores of old records—gospel, blues, parlor tunes—by the Carter Family, the beloved trio from the Clinch Mountains of southwestern Virginia; not long ➤➤➤

bunch of stuff. And it's all great, of course. So why this grouping?

I believe the answer lies in the fact that Smith was acutely aware of a fairly simple truth which took others a great many years and much head-scratching to arrive at: certain musicultural traditions were sympathetic to each other while others were not. The White and Black folks found herein, despite the persistent protestations of many White artists (witness Bill Monroe, who most of his life would have us believe he invented bluegrass from whole cloth—nearly true, of course), listened to and drew from each other's musics in a landscape of musical interchange nonexistent during this same period between any other traditions to be found under the rubric of 'American' music. Smith had an encyclopedic knowledge of 78s and a preternatural feel for the connections between them—across race and ethnic boundaries—not only to codify them for us but also to have this collection persist as an absolutely definitive and essential historical document.

A few words about particular selections: CLARENCE ASHLEY. Probably the best mountain 5 string banjo player ever. Also the scroungiest and most forceful. 'Coo Coo Bird' is one of my favorites. BUELL KAZEE. The theologian. Already a revivalist, even back then, but he made it his own. His version of 'Wagoner's Lad' may be the best ever. UNCLE ECK DUNFORD. What's 'Old Shoes and Leggins' about exactly? Reminds me of the time in the 1950s when I saw Stoneman's band perform in DC, and Scotty Stoneman was shaking his hips like Elvis. A horrible sight. BURNETT & RUTHERFORD. 'Willie Moore' is ➤



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SELECTION 13

G.B. Grayson with Henry Whitter

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

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after, in a Calaveras County trailer camp in the California Gold Rush country, he found autoharpist Sara Carter herself. Though devout in her retirement, barring all music from her door, Carter nevertheless regaled the young collector with tales of Jimmie Rodgers, the Blue Yodeler, who like the Carter Family first recorded in 1927 at the prophetic Bristol Sessions on the Tennessee-Virginia line: tales of how in his days as a railroad brakeman, “everywhere Jimmie Rodgers went he threw marijuana seeds off the back of the train so that you could tell where he had been.” “I was looking for exotic records,” Smith told John Cohen. “Exotic in relation

to what was considered to be the world culture of high class music.”

As Smith searched for the hillbilly classics and primitive blues made in the commercial half-light of the Jazz Age, he found himself in the first years of his own childhood. He might have heard what people have always heard in strange music: the call of another life. He might have imagined that, going back to his first years with his oldest records, he was reliving and rewriting his life from the start. It would have been only a first step; the history of the republic, the story the country told itself, was just as vulnerable. As Smith learned the contours of old styles, as he tracked melodies and phrases through the Chinese boxes of folk etymology, he found himself in the eighteen hundreds, and then back farther still, decades tumbling into centuries, ghost lovers and backwoods crimes replacing the great personages and events of national life.

It was a quest, and not merely personal. “I felt social changes would result,” Smith said of his *Anthology* in 1968; he meant to provoke an instinctive response on a plane of social magic. In the scared and satisfied reactionary freeze of the postwar period, the *Anthology* was meant to distinguish those who responded from those who didn’t, to distinguish those who responded to themselves.

Smith’s definition of “American folk music” would have satisfied no one else. He ignored all field recordings, Library of Congress archives, anything validated only by scholarship or carrying the must of the museum. He wanted music to which people really had responded; records put on sale that at least somebody thought were worth paying for. Though Smith noted that folk songs had

one of my favorites on here. Great, eerie; sounds like it came out of the earth. G.B. GRAYSON. Used to play along Lee Highway in Virginia. Also a semi-nal earth-spirit. CARTER FAMILY. What else needs to be said? Except, why does Sara sing in such a mocking and satirical tone on ‘John Hardy’? Curious. CHARLIE POOLE. ‘White House Blues’—five star performer and record. Most White revivalists don’t sing the full chorus: ‘the ground is covered up with snow.’ He did. JOHN HURT. ‘Frankie’ is one of the best vocal & guitar pieces ever, probably the best guitar recording ever. Rumor (i.e. Spottswood) has it that when this piece was played for Segovia, he couldn’t believe there were not two guitars at work. WILLIAM AND VERSEY SMITH. A great piece. Guitar all but inaudible. Raw sludge. Literally fantastic. They were probably street singers who sang lots of songs about happenings in the news. Wish we could hear the news like this now. FURRY LEWIS. ‘Kassie Jones’—a masterpiece. Most surreal version of the Casey Jones theme. Keeps digressing into talk of other things. Freudian dream imagery. CHARLEY PATTON. Most exciting take on the farmer and the boll weevil yet. Hardest driving guitar recording ever? JILSON SETTERS. Didn’t record the greatest fiddle song ever (belongs to Eck Robertson—‘Sally Goodin’), but is one of the greatest fiddlers America produced. Also has the honor of always having his recordings screwed up by accompanying guitar. Setters - guitar = greatest fiddle recordings ever, maybe. DELMA LACHNEY AND BLIND UNCLE GASPARD. ‘The Dancer.’ Diamond in the rough. One of the best, most beautiful recordings of guitar and fiddle ‘arcadian’ music ever. ECK ROBERTSON. Great, great fiddler. Probably the best. I was driving through Amarillo once, stopped to get a milkshake at a



## SELECTION 13

## G.B. Grayson with Henry Whitter

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

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been commercially recorded as far back as the 1880s, and that markets for blues and hillbilly records took shape in the early 1920s, he restricted himself to the commonly held music of traditional and marginalized American cultures as it was professionally recorded between about “1927, when electronic recording made possible accurate music reproduction, and 1932 when the Depression halted folk music sales.” These years comprised the high point of a time when Northern record companies suddenly realized that the spread of rail lines and the emergence of radio on a mass scale had opened up self-defining and accessible audiences throughout the South for church and dance music, regionally distinctive blues, melodic allegories handed down over generations; as a commercial proposition, those years were a window opening onto a seemingly infinite past. As a historical period, they were an economic opportunity to capture ritual, and it was the scent of ritual Smith pursued.

Dressed up as a good pedagogue, and arming his selected old discs with complex, cross-referenced discographies and bibliographies, neatly attaching story-songs to the historical events from which they derived (the mythical historical events, sometimes), noting changes in approaches to voicing, instrumentation, tunings, and the like, Smith divided his eighty-four choices into three categories, his three sets of two LPs each: “Ballads,” “Social Music,” and “Songs.” Within his five-year span, he paid no attention to chronology as he sequenced the numbers; for all of his painstaking annotation, he never identified a performer by race, determinedly sowing a confusion that for some listeners persists to this day. “It took



## SELECTIONS

17, 23, 53, 67

## The Carter Family

COURTESY SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS ARCHIVES

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Very carefully, Smith constructed internal narratives and orchestrated continuities. He moved tunes about homicide into those about suicide. Or he placed a performance so that it would echo a line or a melody in a preceding number—so that the

roadside diner, and upon exiting spied Robertson coming out of his shack across the street. We talked and did some playing. Then he gave away most of his Social Security check to other poor people on their way to the grocery. HENRY THOMAS. Great piece—‘Old Country Stomp.’ Thomas apparently used to play a lot of kids’ birthday parties. So did Blind Willie McTell. FRANK CLOUTIER AND THE VICTORIA CAFE ORCHESTRA. ‘Moonshiners Dance’ is the best piece on the *Anthology*. When they break into ‘Maggie,’ I get goosebumps. Feel like I’m being tugged into the past. Eerie. I once learned to tapdance to this piece. REV. J.M. GATES. Sold more records in the Black market up to 1942 than anybody. Great singer with a halting preaching style. He recorded about ten different times something called ‘Will Death Be Your Santa Claus.’ MIDDLE GEORGIA SINGING CONVENTION NO. 1. They seem to be singing from a shape note book. Everything’s slightly sharp or flat with really strange timbres. Great recording. REV. MOSES MASON. Phony preacher. Also recorded ‘Hot Tamale Man.’ G.D. Wardlow knows which Louisiana Lake this guy’s from. ‘John the Baptist’’s a great cut. Why does BASCOM LAMAR LUNSFORD always sound like he’s on the verge of cracking up while singing? A fantastic entertainer/lawyer from Asheville, NC. ‘Wish I Was a Mole...’ is a nasty, sadistic song about a prostitute named Gimpy. Frightening. BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON. This, too, is where the soul of man never dies. But I’d rather have heard ‘Jesus’ Blood Can Make Me Whole,’ to be honest. A minor complaint. DIDIER HÉBERT. ‘I Woke Up One Morning in May.’ Love it. Wonderfully out of tune. DOCK BOGGS. A major, major talent. Primitive and scary version of ‘Sugar Baby.’ Charlie Monroe also did it later as ‘Red Rocking Chair.’ I believe Spottswood

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## SELECTION 20

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COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

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repeated line might deepen its powers of suggestion, or the doubled melody intensify the gestures of the actors on its stage. Linking one performance to another, he ultimately linked each to all.

Out of such arrangements, Smith made a world, or a town: Smithville. In this town, Clarence Ashley's "The House Carpenter,"

a tune once known as "The Demon Lover," a ballad in which earthly lust is ended with unearthly punishment, is as suffused with religious awe as the Reverend J.M. Gates's sermon "Must Be Born Again." Here, Bascom Lamar Lunsford's "I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground" is more otherworldly—less at home in this world—than the Memphis Sanctified Singers' "He Got Better Things for You."

Smith opened his first volume, "Ballads," with Dick Justice's "Henry Lee," the story of a knight's murder by his spurned lover, as witnessed by a talking bird ("Not a good record," Smith said with numerological certainty in 1968, "but it had to go first because it was the lowest numbered Child Ballad [of the set]"). He followed it with progressively spookier versions of the often supernatural English and Scottish love tales that since the late 18th-century had functioned in mountain hollows as what in blues language would be called a second mind: tales of murder and suicide in which love is a disease and death the cure. With the air over his town growing heavier, Smith moved to numbers about more prosaic, homegrown killings. The blind fiddler G. B. Grayson—a descendant of the man who arrested Tom Dula in 1866, and who as both a singer and a player sounds at least as old as the story he is telling—describes how in 1807, in Deep River, North Carolina, a pregnant woman named Naomi Wise was drowned by her lover, who escaped justice and disappeared into the West. The sense of age in the performance is displacing. It's not as if the event is being recalled by an ancient witness; it is as if the event, as it happened, has made the witness old. The actions described are all will, the

and Mike Seeger tracked Boggs down near Richlands, VA, based on the weird confluence of John Hurt's 'Richlands Woman Blues' and Hurt's correspondence with some guy named Meyers who lived in Richlands and some other lucky breaks. Or maybe that's completely wrong. BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON. 'Rabbit Foot Blues' is one of his best, most coherent songs all the way through. Strange rhythmic change half way through. Really two songs. A minor masterpiece. I like the Two Poor Boys' version of 'See That My Grave...' a bit better. SLEEPY JOHN ESTES. 'Expressman Blues.' Very strange meter. Great accompaniment from mandolin and piano. There isn't much piano on the *Anthology*. Wonder why. Maybe Harry was a guitar man. UNCLE DAVE MACON. Great, phenomenally charismatic performer. Could sing hard gospel material and then sing songs parodying the church and get away with both. Really hard to tell where he got his material (e.g., his 'I's Going Back to Dixie' is actually an Irving Berlin song—so much for folk-isolation theories). Whenever we used to travel about in the South looking for old records and we would talk to old Black performers, we'd find they always assumed, almost without exception, that Macon was a Black man. I don't think 'Buddy...' and '...Plank Road' are work songs or even derived very strictly from work songs, as Harry suggests. Sam McGee (on six string 'guitar banjo' here) is also fantastic. J. P. NESTOR. 'Train on the Island.' Great. But what is it? Eugene W. Earle says he's from the West Coast. I don't think so."



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Murder is superseded by disaster. Craftsmen are thrown out of work by machines. “TECHNOLOGICAL UNEMPLOYMENT HITS SHOE INDUSTRY IN THE YEAR OF 18 AND 4” is Smith’s headline for the Carolina Tar Heels’ “Peg and Awl”: the band is so comically pathetic, as if it’s all their own fault but they can’t figure out how, you can see Laurel and Hardy acting out what they’re singing. So people go where the work is, and in a refrain that runs all through American song, and past the borders of the country, from “Canadee-i-o” to “The Hills of Mexico,” they find themselves tricked out of their shoes. Stranded in the American version of hell on earth—Arkansas—a “DITCH DIGGER SHOCKED BY EMPLOYMENT AGENT’S GROTESQUE DECEPTIONS” repeats his name again and again because he’s not sure he still owns anything else.

Then the hammer comes down. In the years after the Civil War, John Henry dies in a race with a steam drill. The Titanic sinks. Trains are wrecked; across six minutes, Furry Lewis wonders over Casey Jones’s last ride as if it is a story his mother told him, holding every lesson he will ever need, if only he could plumb the story to its depths. Farms fail; the boll weevil dethrones King Cotton. “Ballads” ends with “Got the Farm Land Blues”, which really is a *farm* land blues. “I woke up this morning,” Clarence Ashley sings with the Tar Heels, “between one and two...”

Though roughly tracing a chronology of British fable and American happenstance, and in most cases tied to historical incidents, these ballads are not historical dramas. They dissolve a known history of wars and elections into a sort of national dream, a flux of desire and punishment, sin and luck, joke and horror—and as in a dream the categories don’t hold. What Smith’s ballads dramatize is action; passivity; regret; sardonicism; absurdity; fear;



## SELECTION 24

Furry Lewis

BY A.R. DANBERG

acceptance; isolation; the wish for mastery running up against forces no one can understand, let alone master. After this—after Kentucky banjoist Buell Kazee’s disappearance into “The Butcher’s Boy,” in which he becomes a young woman reading from her own suicide note (“Ovër my coffin place a snow-white dove/To warn this world I died for love”)—Smith’s two LPs of “Social Music” are a respite, a place of simple pleasures where the most troubled heart is filled only with a gentle yearning.

A dance is underway. Fiddlers play waltzes and reveries, reels and stomps. There is drinking and merriment, time for brazen shouts and fond words. Home is venerated, a beloved dog is recalled, and then—then God, in the person of the Reverend J. M. Gates, asking, like a man making the cruelest joke last as long as he can, “Oh Death Where Is Thy Sting?” Chanting in a fashion that Smith dated to the spread of the Great Awakening to the Georgia territory in the mid-17th-century—chanting against a chorus that seems constantly on the verge of breaking up into pieces—the Atlanta preacher is fearsome and implacable. His voice is deep, harsh, impatient; impatient with the weaknesses of the spirit and the flesh—impatient with human nature. Suddenly you’re trapped. The party wasn’t supposed to end this way, in the middle of a Jonathan Edwards sermon reincarnated as a 1927 gospel hit





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## SELECTION 26

"The Masked Marvel" (Charley Patton)

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

and an ineradicable aspect of national memory, transmitted to all Americans as if it were a gene, but now, in a church that changes shape and color with each new performance, the party is just starting. It's as if, now, the whole community has to pay for the solitary crimes of the first two LPs, and for the revelry of the third—and as if everyone knows that this is fitting and proper, that this is right. But by the time "Social Music" ends, it is not only the shape of the church but God's face that has changed. Against all odds, it is smiling. The Reverend F. W. McGee celebrates "Fifty Miles of Elbow Room." Reverend D. C. Rice and His Sanctified Congregation take their place in a great army. "I'm on the Battlefield for My Lord," they sing, and they make you want to join them. The pleasures of the dance, the wallow in drink, now seem very distant, and worthless. In this place is a great spirit of freedom: the freedom of knowing exactly who you are, and why you are here.

You leave "Social Music" in the arms of certain knowledge. Instantly, on "Songs," you're ripped from that embrace and cast into a charnel house that bears a disturbing resemblance to everyday life: to wishes and fears, difficulties and satisfactions that are, you know, as plain as day, but also, in the voices of those who are now singing, the work of demons—demons like your neighbors, your family, your lovers, yourself. The first side of "Songs" is a panorama of the uncanny. It's not that here nothing is as it seems; as Buell Kazee feels his way through the dimming haze of "East Virginia" and in "I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground," Bascom Lamar Lunsford pictures himself as a lizard in the spring, as Rabbit Brown wanders the one-block labyrinth of "James Alley Blues" and Dock Boggs smiles "Sugar Baby"'s death's-head smile, it's as if nothing that seems even is. "Who'll rock the cradle, who'll sing the song?" Boggs asks, twisting the words until they're scratching off each other's vowels, and Brown answers, his guitar all fore-knowledge, his voice all suspicion, the gonging of his strings making a hall of echoes: *Are you sure we really want to know?*

Now tricksters rule, sharps who can guess your weight and tell your secrets. The carnival has arrived in Smithville. The streets have been rolled up, and the town now offers that quintessential American experience, the ultimate, permanent test of the unfinished American, Puritan or pioneer, loose in a land of pitfalls and surprises: Step right up, ladies and gentlemen! Enter the New



## SELECTION 26

## "The Masked Marvel" (Charley Patton)

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

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“I said, Let’s go to Harlem. Harry flagged a cab. That used up all my money right away. We had a pretty good evening hearing the music and seeing the dancing and he says, ‘Let’s take a cab back.’ I said, ‘I don’t have any money left!’ I said ‘let’s take a subway back’. There it is, about 1 o’clock in the morning, a cold November night in Harlem and the three of us are walking down the sidewalk. It was a funny feeling and suddenly Harry runs over to one of the wastebaskets out on the street, and puts his hand in and then jumps in headfirst and comes out with a pack of something and he starts going on the sidewalk, sorting these out. They’re photographs, and he’s laying them out all over the sidewalk, here, there, grouping them by size and shape, and people are coming out of these dark doorways to see what’s going on. Apparently some photographer in a portrait studio had thrown out all his work and that’s what this was. And Harry walked around to the crowd and gave everybody a picture, and then they all took their pictures and went home...” —JOHN COHEN, transcribed from comments at the Harry Smith memorial, February 9, 1992

Sensorium of Old-Time Music, and feel the ground pulled right out from under your feet!

The two LPs of “Songs” continue on from this first side, maintaining a startling level of power and charm, on through suites of tunes about marriage, labor, dissipation, prison, and death.

Mississippi John Hurt quietly puzzles over John Henry’s self-sacrifice, as if burrowing out from under the rubble he left behind.

Blind Lemon Jefferson makes his guitar into a tolling bell for “See

That My Grave Is Kept Clean.” He stops time, stops Death, and

then, as if he knows the pause is somehow less cheating Death than

a cheat on life, lets the song move on. Uncle Dave Macon’s foot-

stomping exuberance, his long reach for good times, bursts through

even numbers beginning on a chain gang or in the midst of deadly

labor strife. Born in 1870 in Tennessee, Macon died in 1952, the

year Smith’s *Anthology* appeared; before 1924, when he made his

first records, he worked as a teamster. For “Way Down the Old

Plank Road” he stands up in his wagon, pushing his horses, crack-

ing his whip with a Babe Ruth smile: “KILL YOURSELF!” he shouts

out of the hurry of the song. He sounds like he wants to watch and

then go you one better. It’s one of the truest, highest, most aban-

doned moments in American speech—as can seem every note of

“The Lone Star Trail.” With a passion words and melody can elicit

but not account for, movie star Ken Maynard, “the American Boy’s

Favorite Cowboy,” ambles out of the soundtrack of *The Wagon*

*Master* to chant and moan, yodel and wail, stare and tremble, more

alone, more stoic and more restless between heaven and nature, than

anyone has been before. The shape of the land, its vast expanse, its

indifference to who you are or what you want, looms up as this soli-

tary figure says his piece: I am the first cowboy and the last. Here

no one sees me, myself least of all, I am happy, I am free. ➤➤➤



SELECTION 28

“Uncle Bunt” Stephens

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

“I said, Let’s go to Harlem. Harry flagged a cab. That used up all my money right away. We had a pretty good evening hearing the music and seeing the dancing and he says, ‘Let’s take a cab back.’ I said, ‘I don’t have any money left.’ I said ‘let’s take a subway back.’ There it is, about 1 o’clock in the morning, a cold November night in Harlem and the three of us are walking down the sidewalk. It was a funny feeling and suddenly Harry runs over to one of the wastebaskets out on the street, and puts his hand in and then jumps in headfirst and comes out with a pack of something and he starts going on the sidewalk, sorting these out. They’re photographs, and he’s laying them out all over the sidewalk, here, there, grouping them by size and shape, and people are coming out of these dark doorways to see what’s going on. Apparently some photographer in a portrait studio had thrown out all his work and that’s what this was. And Harry walked around to the crowd and gave everybody a picture, and then they all took their pictures and went home...” —JOHN COHEN, transcribed from comments at the Harry Smith memorial, February 9, 1992

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#### SELECTION 28

#### “Uncle Bunt” Stephens

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL



16

SELECTION 30

Prince Albert Hunt

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

The whole long story is brought to a close when it is lifted out of itself, with the freest song imaginable, Henry Thomas's "Fishing Blues," played on panpipes, an instrument that blocks all possibility of tracing the historical origins of this song or that—the high, lilting sound of the panpipes goes back to the end of the Paleolithic. This sound is older than any surviving language, and so might be the message of this song from a railroad bum who criss-crossed the South from the end of the 19th century into the 1940s, a message he repeats over and over, as if it holds the secret of being: "Here's a little something I would like to relate/ Any fish bite if you got good bait."

There is an almost absolute liberation in "Fishing Blues"—a liberation that is impossible not to feel, and easy to understand. Yet there is a liberation just as complete brooding on that first side of "Songs," breathing through Dock Boggs's nihilism, Bascom Lamar Lunsford's pantheism, the ghost dance of Rabbit Brown.

This liberation—or this absolute—is not easy to comprehend, but for just that reason it is here, in Smith's most explosive collage of scavenged old records, that the *Anthology of American Folk Music* finds its center, or its axis; it is here that Smithville begins to shade into Hawthorneville, Melvilleburg, Poetown. Judgment Day is the weather here: in 1926 in "Oh! Death Where Is Thy Sting?" Judgment Day was an event, but in Smithville it is also a way of life, present in the smallest details of landscape and language, gesture and the passage of time. Its presence makes all these things into symbols, and charges them with meaning that cannot be enclosed. "I have seen the task which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised therewith," one of Smith's preachers might be explaining, taking his text from Ecclesiastes. "He hath made everything beautiful in its time; also he hath set the world in the heart, yet so that man cannot find out the work of God from the beginning even to the end."

In an essay on the *Anthology* called "Smith's Memory Theater," Robert Cantwell wrote about one of the songs in this sequence, but he might have been writing about almost any one of them, or all of them. "Listen to 'I Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground' again and again," he says. "Learn to play the banjo and sing it yourself over and over again, study every printed version, give up your career and maybe your family, and you will not fathom it." What he is saying is not that different from what Bob Dylan was saying about folk music in 1965 and '66, when to so many nothing he could have said about folk music could have been less than a lie. "All the authorities who write about what it is and what it should be," Dylan said, "when they say keep it simple, [that it] should be easily understood—folk music is the only music where it isn't simple. It's never been simple. It's weird....I've never written anything hard to understand, not in my head anyway, and nothing as far out as some of the old songs."

I have to think of all this as traditional music. Traditional music is based on hexagrams. It comes about from legends, Bibles, plagues, and it revolves around vegetables and death. There's nobody that's going to kill traditional music. All those songs about roses growing out of people's brains and lovers who are really geese and swans that turn into angels—they're not going to die. It's all those paranoid people who think that someone's going to come and take away their toilet paper—they're going to die. Songs like 'Which



## 16 SELECTION 30

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Side Are You On?' and 'I Love You Porgy'—they're not folk-music songs; they're political songs. They're *already* dead.

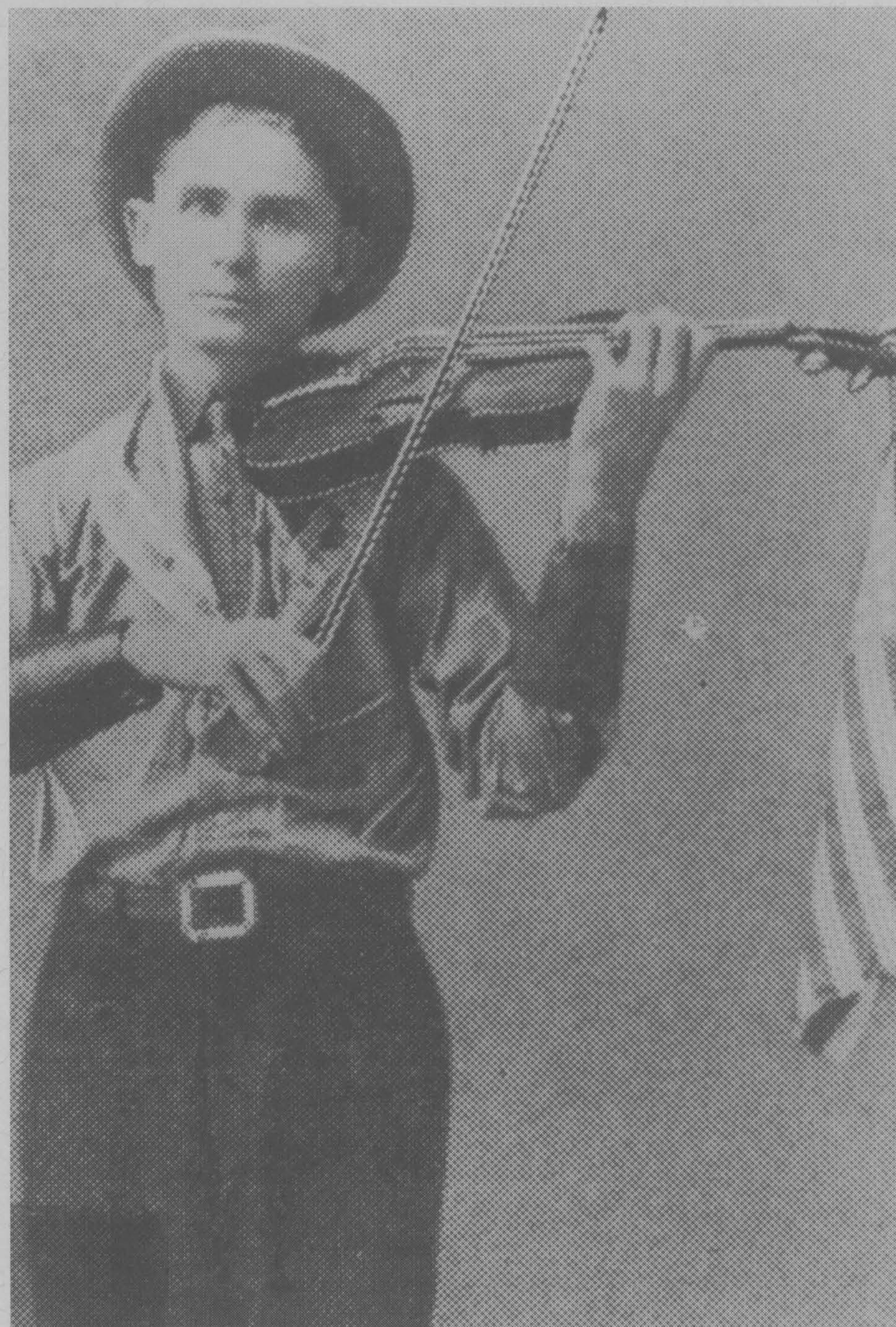
Obviously, death is not very universally accepted. I mean, you'd think that the traditional-music people could gather from their songs that mystery is a fact, a traditional fact...traditional music is too unreal to die. It doesn't need to be protected. Nobody's going to hurt it. In that music is the only true, valid death you can feel today off a record player.

Bob Dylan could have been talking about the first side of Harry Smith's "Songs": one quality that unites the singers here is that *they* sound as if they're already dead, though not because they have accepted that the meaning of the songs they're singing can be fixed in advance. It's as if they're lining out an unspoken premise of the old Southern religion: only the dead can be born again.

No performance captures this sensation more completely than the first number on this magical side, Clarence Ashley's 1929 Columbia recording of "The Coo Coo Bird." There is no more commonplace song in Appalachia: the song has been sung for so long, by so many, in so many different communities, as to seem to some folklorists virtually automatic, a musicological version of the instinctive act, like breathing—and therefore meaningless. As Ashley sang and played the song he paid in full every claim Dylan would make about traditional music. He pays as well all the claims of the uniquely plainspoken argument the South African musicologist Peter van der Merwe makes about the sort of Appalachians who appear all across Smith's *Anthology*: Ashley, Lunsford, Kazee, Boggs, Eck Robertson, the Carter Family, G. B. Grayson, Uncle Dave Macon, Frank Hutchison:

When middle-class America first discovered these mountain folk there was a tendency to present their ways as even more primitive and archaic than they actually were. Nonsense was talked of their 'Elizabethan speech,' as though they had been preserved unaltered since the sixteenth century. As an inevitable reaction, it is now fashionable to point to urban influences on this isolated rural culture. Taking all such reservations into account, I still believe that the biggest danger lies in *underestimating* the strangeness of these cultures.

Clarence Ashley was born in 1895 in Bristol, Tennessee; as a teenager he traveled with minstrel troupes and medicine shows



### SELECTION 33

**Eck Robertson**

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

("I was always crazy about the show business"). By the 1920s he was a professional itinerant musician, playing in string bands, at fairs, on the streets, to miners as they picked up their money or their scrip. He died in 1967. In 1929 he was in his mid-thirties; he sounded seventeen, or one hundred and seventeen, as if he'd died seventeen or one hundred and seventeen years before. Ashley's ►►►



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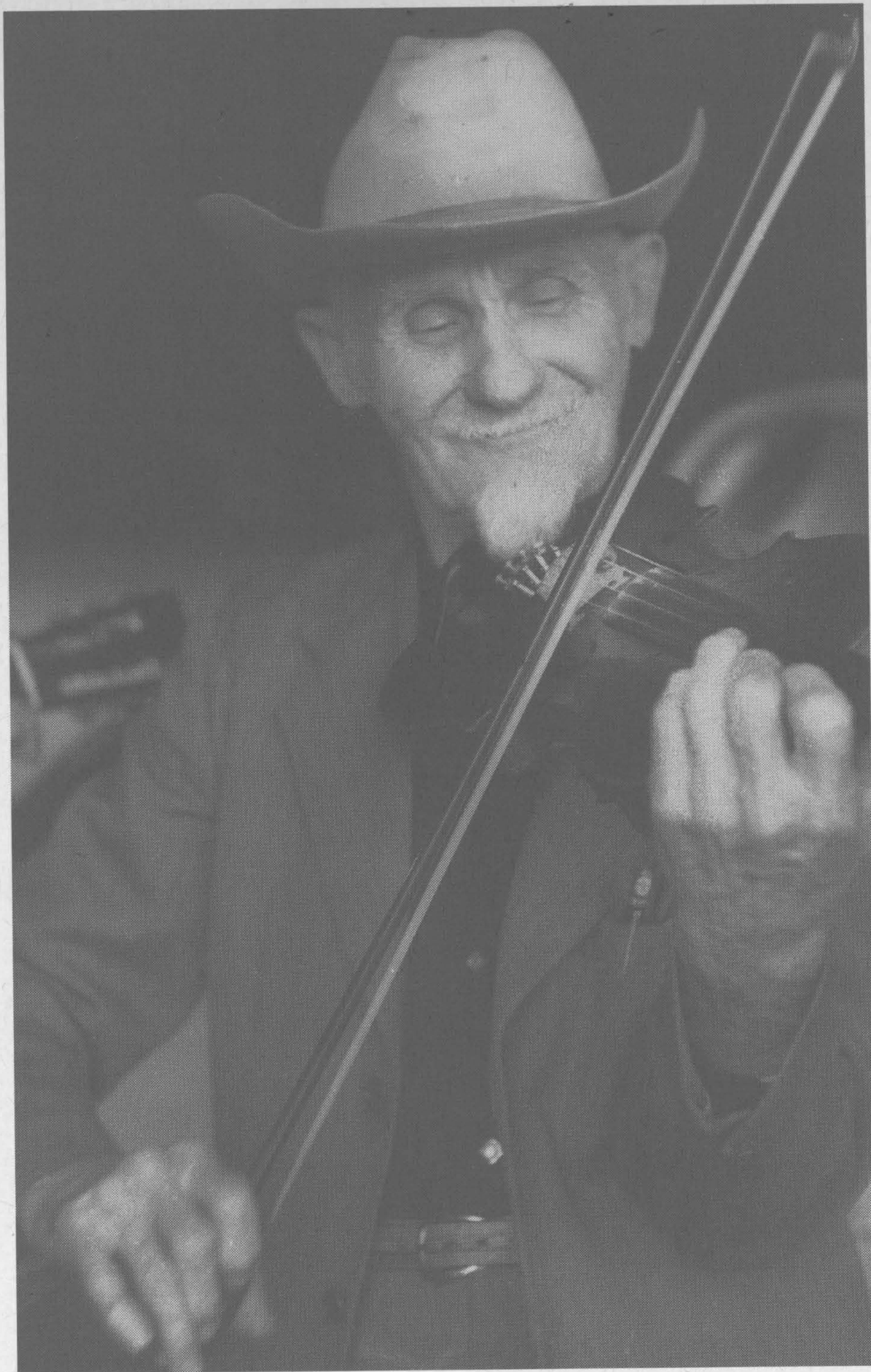
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"First hearing the Harry Smith *Anthology of American Folk Music* is like discovering the secret script of so many familiar musical dramas. Many of these actually turn out to be cousins two or three times removed, some of whom were probably created in ignorance of these original riches.

It also occurred to me that as we are listening at a greater distance in time to a man or woman singing of their fairly recent past of the 1880s, we are fortunate that someone collected these performances of such wildness, straightforward beauty, and humanity." —ELVIS COSTELLO



18

SELECTION 33

Eck Robertson,  
Amarillo, TX, 1963

BY JOHN COHEN

performance made one thing clear: however old the singer was, he wasn't as old as the song.

Like many of the numbers on the third volume of the *Anthology*, "The Coo Coo Bird" was a "folk-lyric" song. That meant it was made up of verbal fragments that had no direct or logical relationship to each other, but were drawn from a floating pool of thousands of disconnected verses, couplets, one-liners, pieces of eight. Harry Smith guessed the folk-lyric form came together some time between 1850 and 1875. Whenever it happened, it wasn't until enough fragments were abroad in the land to reach a kind of critical mass—until there were enough fragments, passing back and forth between Blacks and Whites as common coin, to generate more fragments, to sustain within the matrix of a single musical language an almost infinite repertory of performances, to sustain the sense that out of the anonymity of the tradition a singer was presenting a distinct and separate account of a unique life. This quality—the insistence that the singer is singing his or her own life, as an event, taking place as you listen, its outcome uncertain—separates the song, from which the singer emerges, from the ballad, into which the singer disappears.

What appears to be a singer's random assemblage of fragments to fit a certain melody line may be, for that singer, an assemblage of fragments that melody called forth. It may be a sermon delivered by the singer's subconscious, his second mind. It may be a heretic's way of saying what could never be said out loud, a mask over a boiling face.

Ashley's singing—high, a voice edgy with the energy of musing, of wanting, of not getting, of expecting to get it all tomorrow—rises and falls, dips and wavers, playing off the rhythm his banjo makes like a tide eddying up to a bank again and again. There's a willful irascibility in his voice, a disdain for the consequences of any action the singer might take, or not take. The banjo could be from another song, or another world. The music seems to have been found in the middle of some greater song; it is inexorable. The

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opening and closing flourishes on the banjo seem false, because the figures in the music make no progress, go from no one place to any other; the sound was here before the singer started and it will be here when he's gone.

In this mood, in this weather, the most apparently commonplace fragment in Ashley's "Coo Coo Bird"—the verse seemingly most unburdened by any shard of meaning—cannot be meaningless.

Gonna build me  
Log cabin  
On a mountain  
So high  
So I can  
See Willie  
When he goes  
On by

It sounds like a children's ditty only until you begin to realize the verse is made to refuse any of the questions it makes you ask. Who is Willie? Why does the singer want to watch him? Why must he put aside his life and embark on a grand endeavor (in versions of "The Cuckoo" closer to its protean British form, the log cabin is a castle) just to accomplish this ordinary act? The verse can only communicate as a secret everybody already knows, or as an allusion to a body of knowledge the singer knows can never be recovered, and Ashley only makes things worse by singing as if whatever he's singing about is the most obvious thing in the world. The performance doesn't seem like a jumble of fragments. Rather there is a theme: displacement, restlessness, homelessness, the comic worry of "a people," as Constance Rourke wrote of Americans as they were when the Civil War began, "unacquainted with themselves, strange to the land, unshaped as a nation." "We Americans are all cuckoos," Oliver Wendell Holmes said in 1872. "We make our homes in the nests of other birds." This is the starting point.

As long as seven hundred years ago, the English were singing that the cuckoo heralded the coming of summer, and yet the bird was hated. Its cry was reviled through the centuries as oppressive, repetitious, maniacally boring, a cry to drive you crazy, a cry that was already crazy, befitting a bird that was insane. The cuckoo—the true, "parasitic" cuckoo, which despite Holmes's choice of it for



SELECTIONS 51, 63 Bascom Lamar Lunsford

LUNSFORD COLLECTION, PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE,  
MARS HILL COLLEGE

national bird is not found in the United States—lays its eggs in the nests of other birds. It is a kind of scavenger in reverse: violating the natural order of things, it is by its own nature an outsider, a creature that cannot belong. Depositing its orphans, leaving its progeny to be raised by others, to grow up as impostors in another's house—as America filled itself up with slaves, indentured servants, convicts, hustlers, adventurers, the ambitious and the greedy, the fleeing and the hated, who took or were given new, impostors' names—the cuckoo becomes the other, and sees all other creatures as other. If the host bird removes a cuckoo's egg from its nest, the ➤➤➤

opening and closing flourishes on the banjo seem false, because the figures in the music make no progress, go from no one place to any other; the sound was here before the singer started and it will be here when he's gone.

In this mood, in this weather, the most apparently commonplace fragment in Ashley's "Coo Coo Bird"—the verse seemingly most unburdened by any shard of meaning—cannot be meaningless.

Gonna build me  
Log cabin  
On a mountain  
So high  
So I can  
See Willie  
When he goes  
On by

It sounds like a children's ditty only until you begin to realize the verse is made to refuse any of the questions it makes you ask. Who is Willie? Why does the singer want to watch him? Why must he put aside his life and embark on a grand endeavor (in versions of "The Cuckoo" closer to its protean British form, the log cabin is a castle) just to accomplish this ordinary act? The verse can only communicate as a secret everybody already knows, or as an allusion to a body of knowledge the singer knows can never be recovered, and Ashley only makes things worse by singing as if whatever he's singing about is the most obvious thing in the world. The performance doesn't seem like a jumble of fragments. Rather there is a theme: displacement, restlessness, homelessness, the comic worry of "a people," as Constance Rourke wrote of Americans as they were when the Civil War began, "unacquainted with themselves, strange to the land, unshaped as a nation." "We Americans are all cuckoos," Oliver Wendell Holmes said in 1872. "We make our homes in the nests of other birds." This is the starting point.

As long as seven hundred years ago, the English were singing that the cuckoo heralded the coming of summer, and yet the bird was hated. Its cry was reviled through the centuries as oppressive, repetitious, maniacally boring, a cry to drive you crazy, a cry that was already crazy, befitting a bird that was insane. The cuckoo—the true, "parasitic" cuckoo, which despite Holmes's choice of it for



SELECTIONS 51, 63

Bascom Lamar Lunsford

LUNSFORD COLLECTION, PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE,  
MARS HILL COLLEGE

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20

**SELECTIONS 62, 73**     **Dock Boggs**

COURTESY MIKE SEEGER COLLECTION AND DOCK BOGGS

cuckoo may take revenge, killing all of the host's eggs or chicks; in the same manner, as new Americans drove out or exterminated the Indians, when the cuckoo egg hatches the newborn may drive out any other nestlings, or destroy any other eggs. As a creature alien-

ated from its own nature, the cuckoo serves as the specter of the alienation of each from all.

If this is the theme of the song, then rather than the anti-narrative many find in folk-lyric performances, what is present in Clarence Ashley's performance—the axis on which Smith's *Anthology* seems to turn, or maybe the proud anthem of Smithville sung every night at sundown—is a master narrative: a narrative of American willfulness and fatedness, a narrative implied but altogether missing, replaced instead by hints and gestures, code words and winks, a whole music of secret handshakes. Just as there is a certain historical impersonation on “Ballads,” with Virginian Keli Harrell singing as Charles Guiteau on the scaffold, recounting his assassination of President Garfield, and on “Social Music” there are no individuals, only townfolk indistinguishable from their fellows on “Songs,” where the premise is that one is singing as oneself, the mask goes on, the most profound mask of all, transparent and impenetrable. Who is singing? Who *are* these people? If you could put your hand through the mask you would feel nothing but air.

“The Coo Coo Bird” seems to assume a shared history among its listeners, to take in the countless volumes of what does not need to be said, and yet as Ashley sings the song it is almost a dare. That's how it feels; but who or what is being dared, or why, is completely unclear. “Oh, the coo coo/ She's a pretty bird/ And she warbles, as she flies,” Ashley begins. “And it never/ Hollers coo coo/ Till the fourth day/ Of July.” It is usual to dismiss this as not even a metaphor, merely a rhyme. But that is because as a metaphor this verse can be understood but never explained; because it can place the listener, pull the listener's feet right out from under, but cannot itself be placed. Ashley's voice can be solemn, wry, crafty, and blank all at once: his song is not an argument, it is a riddle.

Imagine that in 1929 this was a riddle Clarence Ashley took pleasure putting before the country. Part of the charge in the music on the *Anthology of American Folk Music*—its reach across time, carrying such individualistic flair, in T. J. Clark's phrase such collective vehemence—comes from the fact that, for the first time, people from isolated, scorned, forgotten, disdained communities and cultures had the chance to speak to each other, and to the nation at large. A great uproar of voices that were at once old and new was heard, as happens only occasionally in democratic cultures—but



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always, when it happens, with a sense of explosion, of energies contained for generations bursting out all at once. The story is in the numbers. When the first record approximating a blues, Mamie Smith's "Crazy Blues," was released, in 1920, it sold a million copies in its first year; it was the same in 1923, with the record that revealed what would soon become the hillbilly market. As Smith notes in the foreword to his *Anthology* booklet:

Ralph Peer, of Okeh Records, went to Atlanta with portable equipment and a record dealer there offered to buy 1000 copies if Peer would record the singing of circus barker 'Fiddling' John Carson. 'The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane' and 'The Old Hen Cackled and the Rooster's Going to Crow' were cut, and according to Peer, 'It was so bad that we didn't even put a serial number on the records, thinking that when the local dealer got his supply that would be the end of it. We sent him 1,000 records which he got on Thursday. That night he called New York on the phone and ordered 5,000 more sent by express and 10,000 by freight. When the national sale got to 500,000 we were so ashamed we had "Fiddling" John come up to New York and do a re-recording of the numbers.'

Many copies of these records were bought by people without phonographs. They bought the discs as talismans of their own existence; they could hold these objects in their hands and feel their own lives dramatized. In such an act, people discovered the modern world: the thrill of mechanical reproduction. "Something that had survived orally for a very long time suddenly turned into something that Sears Roebuck sold," Smith said in 1968, "and you could order it from Pakistan or wherever you might be"—such as Deep

**PETER STAMPFEL, May 1997:**

"The first time I heard the Harry Smith *Anthology*, I didn't really hear it. I only heard Volume Three ('Songs'), which was everyone's favorite. It was in late 1959 at the Cafe East, a coffee house on East Ninth Street in New York City, just north of McSorley's Old Ale House. Across the street from the East was another coffee house called The Dollar Sign, which had a card in the window that said 'peyote for sale.' The peyote was processed into double '0' gelatin capsules, and the cops couldn't bust the owner, Baron, because peyote wasn't illegal then. The cops really hated that. Many years later I found that Harry Smith had done an extensive study on Native American peyote music and rituals in the 1940s. Five years later, Steve Weber and I volunteered to back up the Fugs, who had formed at Ed Sanders' Peace Eye Book Store and Scrounge Lounge, on East Tenth Street, further east, between Avenues B and C. Which brings us back to Harry Smith, since he was the producer for the Fugs' first album, only back then the producers were called A&R men, meaning artist and repertoire. The idea was that those clueless musicians needed some wise company-hand to pick their songs for them. With choice material like 'Coca-Cola Douche' and 'Bull Tongue Clit,' the Fugs had that particular avenue well covered. So Harry's contribution to the



**SELECTIONS 64, 65** Left to right: Iver Edwards, George Stoneman, Uncle Eck Dunford, Pop Stoneman, Hattie Stoneman, Bolen Frost

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION,  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

River, North Carolina, or Bristol, Tennessee. Why was it inexpressibly more exciting to hear a song you could hear next door or at a dance next Saturday night coming out of a box? Precisely because you could have heard it next door, or even played it yourself—but not with the distancing of representation, which made a magic mirror and produced the shock of self-recognition. What one saw in the mirror was a bigger, more various, less finished, less fated self than one had ever seen before. "We cannot escape our life in



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## SELECTION 69

## Blind Lemon Jefferson

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

these fascist bodies,” Camille Paglia wrote in *Sexual Personae*; as a black ten-inch 78 turned, for a moment one could. One could experience a freedom from one’s physical body, and from one’s social body—the mask you wore to go about in public among those who thought they knew you, an unchosen mask of nervousness and tradition, the mask that, when worn too long, makes the face behind it shrivel up and rot away. For some, a spinning record opened up the possibility that one might say anything, in any voice, with any face, the singer’s mask now a sign of mastery.

For a few years, this possibility became a fact—and, exposing a hidden republic, a democratic event. The special energy of such an event must have been part of what Harry Smith heard in the commercially vital years of the late 1920s, when all but fifteen of the recordings on the *Anthology of American Folk Music* were recorded, and why he orchestrated the event as a conversation, the folk music of people attempting to connect to other people, to take their money, to feel their presence, to change their minds, even to change the music, to take it places—places in the nation, places in the heart—it had never been. “I don’t think that you can say that folk culture was doing such and such, and that in popular culture these things became disseminated—although I used to think that was the case,” Smith said to John Cohen in 1968. “I now believe that the dissemination of music affects the quality. As you increase the critical audience of any music, the level goes up.” “Doesn’t it also go down,” Cohen said, “because it has to appeal to a more divergent range of people?” “I don’t think they’re that divergent,” Smith said changing from folklorist to democratic theorist. “There isn’t that

proceedings were his presence, inspiration, and best of all, smashing a wine bottle against the wall while we were recording ‘Nothing.’

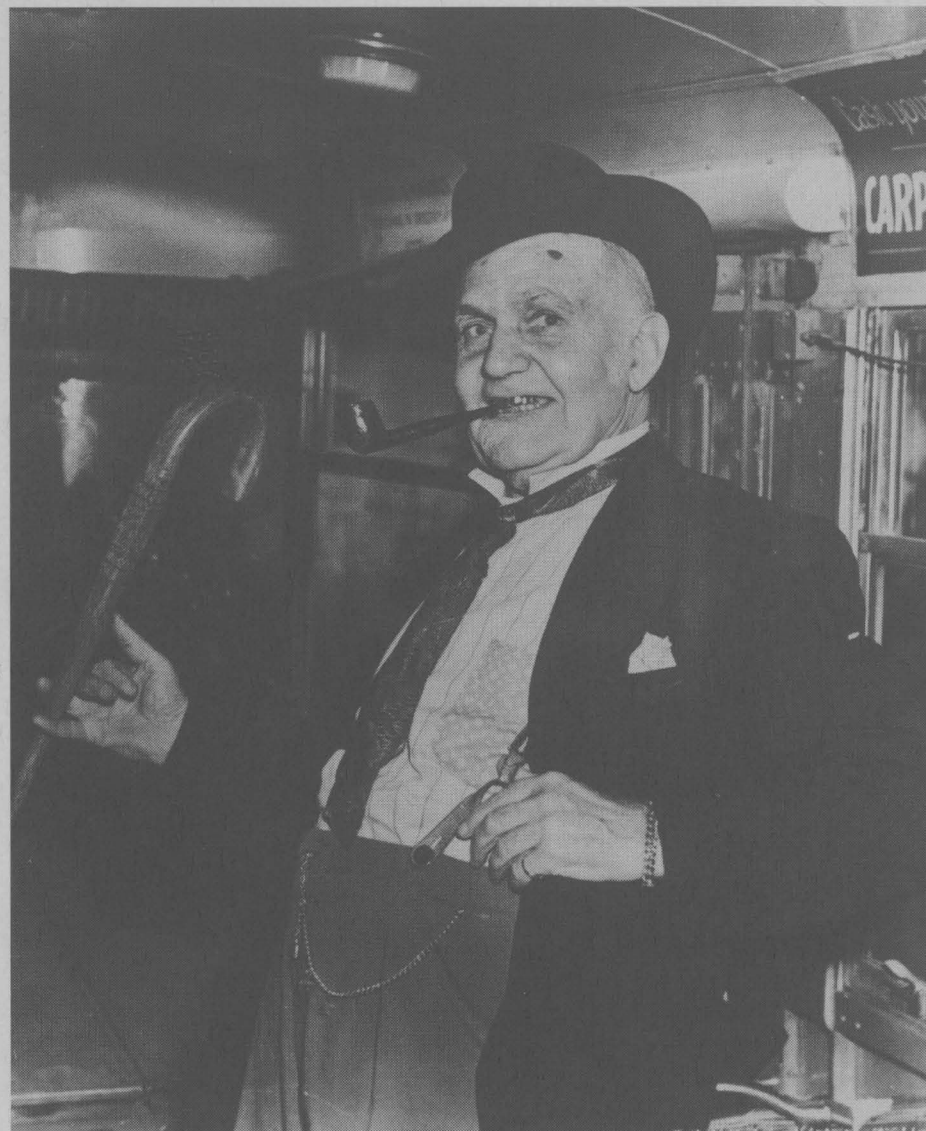
Thanks to the New Lost City Ramblers, I was aware of what was then called ‘old timey’ music, which at the time was about as far in the past as the Beatles are today. The HSA covered the years from 1927, when the advent of electronic recording greatly improved sound quality, to 1933, and the Depression-caused collapse of the recording industry. Listening to the amazing breadth of music herein, which is, among other things, the very foundation of rock & roll, I was long ago struck by the fact that when it was released in 1952, rock & roll was just being born. Anyway, it wasn’t until 1963 when the idea of combining HSA era music and rock & roll—the basis of much of the music I’ve been doing ever since—occurred to me.

But let’s go back to 1959 and Volume Three. Let’s just take Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Rambler’s ‘White House Blues.’ Rarely has any human endeavor been so simple and so perfect. The paper clip comes to mind. Three simple parts—guitar, banjo, and fiddle (the fiddler’s name was Posey Rorer!) basically playing about the same thing every go-round, no breaks or solos, and fitting together like clockwork in heaven. I would play it over and over, going into a state of the purest bliss. And Uncle Dave Macon! And Cajun Music! And The Carter Family! And Mississippi John Hurt, who actually got to play ‘Creole Belle’ with in 1964! And Henry (Texas) Thomas, playing the most archaic pre-blues guitar ever recorded, accompanying

much difference between one person and another.”

There is, though—and that is why the spirit of the democratic event dramatized in Smith’s *Anthology* has its own peculiar, for some irresistible, cast. In the tension between the one and the many, that democracy reveals itself on the *Anthology*—because to a great degree the music Smith wove together was not exactly made by a folk. It was made by willful, ornery, displaced, unsatisfied, ambitious individuals (almost all of them men, because it was men and not women who were permitted to exhibit such traits in public): contingent individuals who were trying to use the resources of their communities to stand out from those communities, or to escape them, even if they never left home.

These were people who had summoned the nerve to attend auditions held by scouts from Northern record companies, or who had formed bands and tried to get their fellow men and women, people just like them, to pay attention to them as if they were not quite just like them. These were people who, if only for a moment, looked beyond the farms and mines to which they were almost certainly chained. The stories they would later tell of journeying to New York to record are almost all the same. *How*, one singer after another would recall asking himself—as the singers spoke in the 1960s, when folklorists and fans and record collectors had tracked down the *Anthology*’s survivors—Ashley, Boggs, John Hurt, Sleepy John Estes, Furry Lewis, Eck Robertson, Buell Kazee, so many more—*how*, they remembered asking themselves, as they arrived in New York City in the 1920s like tourists from some foreign land, *how* could they keep hold of their pride, speak their piece as if they



SELECTIONS 78, 79

Uncle Dave Macon

COURTESY COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION

LIBRARY AND MEDIA CENTER

himself with panpipes held in a harmonica holder! The mythological blues! His ‘Fishing Blues,’ from Volume Three, has been covered by the Holy Modal Rounders, the Lovin’ Spoonful, and Taj Mahal, and his sound is the basis for Canned Heat’s ‘Going Up the Country.’ Hearing all these people for the very first time, it was as if a veil was lifted, and I was finally aware of what seemed to me to be the very heart of American music. That’s what I was born to do, I thought. Play and sing like those guys.

Shortly after, I heard Volume One (‘Ballads’), and decided to try and copy the version of ‘Ommie Wise’ therein. It was just one guy, playing fiddle and singing, at once a musical tradition centuries old and a commercial recording. Good old days indeed. I had stopped playing violin after high school (I had been in the orchestra), but was habitually carrying my violin around since leaving Milwaukee, almost subconsciously intending to become a fiddler at some vague time in the future. I started playing banjo in 1958, but when I arrived in New York I found everyone played better than I did, which wasn’t hard, considering I had only been playing for sixteen months, and lacked the quick reflexes and natural grace of those who pick up on an instrument rapidly. As an aside, I’d like to mention that I’m a slow learner, but I persevere and tend to do things for the long run. Many of the players I met when I came to New York who could play circles around me lost interest and stopped playing. Slow and steady wins the race. A stitch in time saves



## SELECTION 83

Ken Maynard

COURTESY OF THE SOUTHERN FOLKLIFE COLLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

knew their neighbors would hear, but also as if they imagined the nation itself might actually acknowledge their existence: myself, Clarence Ashley, yes, but also everyone I know, and those I don't know, my ancestors, and those I'll leave behind?

It is this spirit—the pride of knowledge to pass on, which is a fear for the disappearance of that knowledge and of its proper language, and a step past that fear a looming up of an imagined America one never dared imagine before, whole and complete in single image—that makes a whole of the *Anthology of American Folk Music*. It is this suspicion, that there is, somewhere, a perfectly, absolutely metaphorical America—an arena of rights and obligations, freedoms and restraints, crime and punishment, love and death, humor and tragedy, speech and silence—that makes kin of Harry Smith and all those he brought forth so long after they stepped forward to say their piece.

WHAT IS SMITHVILLE? It is a small town whose citizens are not distinguishable by race. There are no masters, and no slaves. The prison population is large, and most are part of it at one time or another. While some may escape justice, they do not remain among their fellow citizens; executions take place in public. There are, after all, a lot of murders here—crimes of passion, of cynicism, of mere reflex—and also suicides. Here both murder and suicide are rituals, acts instantly transformed into legend, facts that in all their specificity transform everyday life into myth, or reveal that at its highest pitch life is a joke. Thus humor abounds, most of it cruel: as the citizens love to sing, “Roosevelt’s in the White House

nine. As ye sow, so shall ye reap. A penny saved is a penny earned. But I only met two fiddle players, Danny Z, and Alan Block, who oddly was also from Wisconsin. New York City was so desperate for fiddlers it even welcomed my ragged-but-right efforts. A recent review has referred to my fiddle style as ‘go-to-hell.’ I really like that.

So for the first time, I played along with the HSA, a pastime which would come to have an almost religious significance. I discovered that ‘Ommie Wise’ was in G! G! The people’s key!, as well as my personal favorite key, mainly because it was so easy to play on the fiddle and banjo.

But for some reason, no one had Volume Two (‘Social Music’). By October of 1960 I could fiddle pretty good and had moved to Berkeley. I asked several people about Volume Two, and was told it was ‘no good’ or ‘the bad one.’ But finally I got hold of the two LPs and played them. I was most strongly moved by the Cajun version of ‘Home Sweet Home.’ After the first few bars, I collapsed to the floor, rolling around with hysterical laughter, which continued till the end of the cut. I had never had a reaction to music like that in my life. I really miss having things like that happen to me. I can never understand why so many people back then didn’t like Volume Two, which is my personal favorite.

Consider, for example, the remarkable instrumentals—all fiddle tunes except for ‘Moonshiner’s Dance,’ a medley that foreshadowed Spike Jones,

he's doing his best/ McKinley's in the graveyard, he's taking his rest." There is a constant war between the messengers of God and ghosts and demons, dancers and drinkers, and, for all anyone knows, between God's messengers and God himself—no one has ever seen him, but then no one has ever seen a cuckoo either. The town is simultaneously a seamless web of connections and an anarchy of separations: who would ever shake hands with Dock Boggs, who sounds as if his bones are coming through his skin every time he opens his mouth? And yet who can turn away from the dissatisfaction in his voice, the refusal ever to be satisfied with the things of this world or the promises of the next?

This is Smithville. Here is a mystical body of the republic, a kind of public secret: a declaration of what sort of wishes and fears lie behind any public act, a declaration of a weird but clearly recognizable America within the America of the exercise of institutional majoritarian power. Here the cadence of Clarence Ashley's banjo is both counterpoint and contradiction to any law; here everyone calls upon the will and everyone believes in fate. It is a democracy of manners—a democracy, finally, of how people carry themselves, of how they appear in public. The ruling question of public life is not that of the distribution of material goods or the governance of moral affairs, but that of how people plumb their souls and then present their discoveries, their true selves, to others—unless, as happens here often enough, the fear of not belonging, or the wish for true proof that one does belong, takes over, and people assume the mask that makes them indistinguishable from anyone else. But in Smithville that mask never stays on for long.

God reigns here, but his rule can be refused. His gaze cannot be escaped; his hand, maybe. You can bet: you can stake a probably real exile on a probably imaginary homecoming. Or you can take yourself out of the game, and wait for a death God will ignore; then you, like so many others, already dead but still speaking, will take your place in the bend of a note in "The Coo Coo Bird." It's limbo, but it's not bad; on the fourth day of July you get to holler.

E N D

Adapted from Greil Marcus, *Invisible Republic: Bob Dylan's Basement Tapes*. New York: Henry Holt. ©1997 by Greil Marcus. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

## ENDNOTE FROM PAGE SIX:

In the early 1960s, Irwin Silber of *Sing Out!* magazine took over the marketing of Folkways Records and replaced Smith's chosen art with a Ben Shahn Farm Security Administration photograph of a battered, starving farmer, effectively transforming Smith's alchemical allegory into Depression-style protest art. In the context of time, when folk music was linked to protest, specifically in terms of the civil rights movement and the commonly invoked national shame of Appalachian poverty and backwardness, with poverty understood as ennobling and the poor themselves often perceived as art statements, it was a smart commercial move.

another of my childhood heroes. Short snippets of 'Nearer the Cross,' 'When You Wore a Tulip,' and 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie,' among others, broken up by shouts of One! Two! Three! Four! and four blasts of the starting chord for the next tune! So cool! And the weird shouted comments by a guy I assumed was the band leader/big mouth/wiseass. We are talking seriously strange. The fiddle tunes themselves remain the best recorded collection of fiddle tunes I've ever heard in one place to this day. The diversity of styles continues to amaze me. Post Bluegrass fiddlers tend to sound similar, but these guys sound like they come from different planets! And the religious stuff! It was the first time I heard shape note hymns. And Blind Willie Johnson's 'John The Revelator'—Blind Willie's demonic bellow of 'Who's that writin'' followed by his wife's angelic keening of 'John the Revelator'—and the Carter Family's 'Little Moses,' back to back. If God were a DJ he'd be Harry Smith.

Have I told you that these records changed my life—and the lives of thousands of others—forever? I've taken a number of songs from them and given them new words. When Bob Dylan was learning to be a songwriter in 1961, he also wrote new words to a number of Smith *Anthology* songs. Hell, I'm still doing it. And the HSA songs I've recorded and performed as-is number in the dozens. This is the Touchstone, the Grail, The Real Deal, The Nitty Gritty, Ground Zero. Long may it wave."

For that generation of urban youth who began to seek their truer America in its vernacular musics, the *Anthology* became a central and most powerful document

# The Brotherhood of the Anthology

Jon Pankake

FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS HARRY SMITH'S *Anthology of American Folk Music* intended? Moses Asch's notes state grandly that the collection will make a "rich heritage of the American people" available to "the majority of Americans especially those who live in metropolitan areas." But the sales of the collection over the years hardly measure up to Asch's ambition: in our current vast wasteland of cultural artifacts, the *Anthology* is known to a minuscule number of Americans. In retrospect, one suspects that the audience who took the *Anthology* and its "rich heritage" for their own, intended or not, was the questing young of the 1950s and 1960s, those post-Eisenhower seekers after an America somehow more authentic than the plastic version they saw being offered to them in the mass media. For that generation of urban youth who began to seek their truer America in its vernacular musics, the *Anthology* became a central and most powerful document. As with Ishmael, whose whale ship was his Harvard and Yale, that first generation of the Folk Song Revival made the *Anthology* their Indiana and UCLA: an

education and initiation into the study and performance of traditional musical forms.

In the case of my own questing youth, my discovery of the *Anthology* at the age of twenty-one quite literally changed the course of my life. I was introduced to the *Anthology* in 1959 by Paul Nelson, a friend and classmate at the University of Minnesota and I had become casually interested in what campus life regarded as "folk music." We had attended a Pete Seeger concert, bought a few LPs by Seeger and others by Ed McCurdy, Oscar Brand, Weavers, and Josh White, and had searched unsuccessfully at a campus record shop for recordings recommended by Seeger, then by Woody Guthrie and Lead Belly. Casting about for other examples of folk music, Paul had located a copy of the *Anthology* on the back shelves of the record distributor where he worked part-time and invited me to listen to the new album with him.

Paul, his wife Doris, and I stayed up late that night listening with astonishment to the strange music of the *Anthology*, so unlike the "folk music" we had heard on available LPs. As I remember, Doris finally had the good sense to fall asleep, but Paul and I

stayed up till dawn talking excitedly and listening over and over to the six discs of the *Anthology*. We were especially enthralled by "Willie Moore," "Boll Weevil Blues," "The Coo Coo Bird," "James Alley Blues," "Single Girl," "Spike Driver Blues," "Train on the Island," "Indian War Whoop," "John the Revelator," and "Buddy Won't You Roll Down the Line." We found the music emotionally shattering yet culturally incomprehensible. Although we frequently failed to understand the words sung by the musicians, we found ourselves entranced nevertheless by the pure sound of their voices and instruments and by the intoxicating rhythms of their performances. These lost, archaic, savage sounds seemed to carry some peculiarly American meaning for us, albeit in a syntax we couldn't yet decipher. Unable to put aside the excitement of discovery the *Anthology* had installed in us, we decided to start a fanzine, *The Little Sandy Review*, devoted to discussing the difference between the "folk music" on the *Anthology* and the "folk music" represented by the artists and albums of the recording industry.

To inform our writing, we set out to learn who the artists on the *Anthology* were, and how their recorded performances came to be, and perhaps what these performances meant. We found the task a discouragingly difficult one. The primitive state of discological scholarship in the 1950s was such that even Harry Smith had been unaware that the "Masked Marvel" was a Paramount pseudonym for Mississippi blues master Charley Patton. For us, even the most obvious factual questions defied our research attempts. In our fascination with "Willie Moore," for example, we wanted to know where Burnett and Rutherford came from, which man sang and played which instrument, what other recordings they had made. To our disappointment, the library of the University of Minnesota contained not an iota of information about Burnett and Rutherford, the Carter Family, or any other *Anthology* artist. Consequently, our quest soon led us outside the limits of conventional academic resources.

My own search eventually drew me into a netherworld of collector's newsletters, record auction lists, jazz and blues scholarship, mimeographed ephemera, and cranky antiquarian collectors knowledgeable about the history of the recording industry but hostile to academia and indifferent to the study of folklore. Study of the *Anthology* demanded new ways of learning, ones which began to

whet my appetite for interdisciplinary research and writing both within and outside of academic disciplines. Some years later when I began my graduate studies, still under the influence of the *Anthology*, I was to change from my undergraduate focus on the formal study of European literature to the interdisciplinary study of vernacular American culture.

In 1959, as I began to read in the libraries of formal folklore scholarship, I became frustrated with what I perceived to be the folklorists' obsession with texts and musical notation. I wanted to study not the texts but the physical sounds of the *Anthology* performances. What I really wanted to understand was how the guitar could speak so differently in the hands of Maybelle Carter and Blind Lemon Jefferson, how the 5-string banjo could span an aural galaxy stretching from the cosmic to the tragic, from Chubby Parker and Uncle Dave Macon to Buell Kazee and Dock Boggs, how the rippling cascade of notes in John Hurt's accompaniment to "Frankie" could possibly issue from one pair of hands. About such matters the folklore books of the 1950s were silent.

Abandoning the library, I bought a fifteen-dollar Harmony guitar and set about learning to play by ear from the recorded performances of the *Anthology*, not from a desire to perform but rather from a desire to retrace with my own fingers and hands the physical movements of the musicians who so fascinated me, to understand the sounds they produced through my body, as I could not with my intellect. One by one, I took up the banjo, then the fiddle, the harmonica, the mandolin, the autoharp, the Hawaiian guitar, learning by ear from old recordings the rudiments of each instrument. Thus, the *Anthology* led me into a lifetime of a kind of physical learning unknown to my bookish university education, and thirty-eight years after first hearing "Spike Driver Blues" my now-arthritic fingers can still trace with intense pleasure the syncopated magic of John Hurt's guitar.

Harry Smith's discographical footnotes to the *Anthology* indicated that the recordings of his collection were but a small part of a larger world of commercially recorded folk music, the dimensions and contents of which were impossible to ascertain in 1959 but which I also set out to explore. As in the old folk tales, a helper soon appeared to point out a pathway into this unknown world. Another friend, Barry Hansen, while searching for old rhythm ➤➤➤

**"The single greatest influence on my life....I wore out two sets of the *Anthology*. It colors everything I hear today." —LAWRENCE COHN**

& blues records in a junk shop, discovered two old battered Carter Family Decca 78 RPM discs and a Brunswick 78 RPM by a group called Al Hopkins and His Buckle Busters. I tape recorded Barry's discs and soon was able to trade dubs of these recordings to a Minneapolis collector of railroad memorabilia for dubs of his 78 RPM discs of railroad songs by Mainer's Mountaineers, Darby and Tarlton, and Riley Puckett. I traded these dubs to a collector of vintage 78s for dubs of Dock Boggs and Ernest Stoneman discs he had bought at mail-order record auctions. Within two years I had located other seekers after *Anthology*-type music in New Haven, Cambridge, and Berkeley, and was soon trading entire 7" reels of dubs of old-time country songs and blues.

I continued to collect tape dubs of 78 RPM records for the next twenty years, eventually compiling a collection of some thousands of titles. This collection eventually came to resemble a cosmic version of the *Anthology*, its parameters defined quite precisely by the kinds of music and the artists Harry Smith had included there, but its horizons intended to be infinite: I wanted to hear all the recordings made by Uncle Dave Macon, all the Blind Willie Johnsons, all the Frank Hutchisons, all the recordings of 5-string banjo and so on, including all the recordings of all the artists cited by Smith in his discographical footnotes.

The *Anthology* led me not only into intellectual pursuits but also into a fellowship of rich personal contacts. As the Folk Song Revivalists of the 1960s began to search for and to locate the surviving artists of the *Anthology*, I came in time to meet eleven of the musicians who appear on the *Anthology*. More importantly, through the *Little Sandy Review*, I began to meet other young people who had likewise come under the spell of the *Anthology*, and these men and women—fellow "Anthologists" all—became my lifetime friends and associates. Thus, today I know an attorney who, unbeknownst to his colleagues at the Minnesota statehouse, will take out his 1933 National Duolian guitar and sing a passionate rendition of "Henry Lee." I know a physicist at a nationally important engineering firm who loves nothing better than to fiddle and sing "Old Shoes and Leggins," "Willie Moore," and "Ommie Wise." I know a retired postal worker who years ago showed me on his old Silvertone banjo

how he had learned to "frail" like Clarence Ashley by listening to "The Coo Coo Bird." I know a prominent professor of folklore who, when we were graduate assistants at the University of Minnesota, taught me the guitar lick that Furry Lewis uses on "Kassie Jones." And best of all is the girl who first heard the *Anthology* on a borrowed copy in her college dormitory room and resolved to learn the 5-string banjo, and with whom I have shared thirty-five years of marriage, countless Carter Family duets at the kitchen sink, and endless discussions of the music of the *Anthology*.

While the *Anthology* itself has remained something of an underground document, its influences continue to haunt the popular culture. One of Bob Dylan's most recent albums, *World Gone Wrong*, contains a performance of "Stackalee" derived from the *Anthology* version by Frank Hutchison. Recently while "information surfing" on the Usenet newsgroup rec.music.folk, I noted a posting by a student who had just obtained "an old Folkways record" which contained a "great performance of 'Boll Weevil.'" The student asked if anyone on the network knew the identity of the Masked Marvel and could provide discographical or biographical information. Sitting at my computer screen, I seemed to be looking into a cyberspace mirror of my own past. "Boll Weevil Blues" still reaches out, I marveled, still draws an initiate into the mystery of the man behind that rasping and passionate voice, still sets a novice questing for answers to the quintessentially American questions the singer poses: who am I, from whence do I come, what does my music mean?

I typed out a reply directing the student to the Yazoo reissues of Patton's material, Godrich and Dixon's discography, and Calt and Wardlow's biography of Patton, reflecting on the ease with which this discoverer's eager questions could now ride the information superhighway. Perhaps, I thought, powered by the laser and computer technology of the twenty-first century, the *Anthology* may yet fulfill Moses Asch's dream of reaching that "majority of Americans" in pursuit of their truest and best heritage. I finished typing, hit the "send" key, and the brotherhood of the *Anthology* had gained yet another citizen toward that distant majority.



He would lend out books that he thought you might want, gave away paintings and collages, but once a record came into his room it never left.

# West Coast Record Collector

Luis Kemnitzer

PANORAMIC WAY, OFFICIALLY A STREET in Berkeley, was a concrete path and steps in the lower Berkeley Hills above the University of California campus, and 5 Panoramic Way was an unprepossessing green door in what looked like the basement of a house that I never really looked at. Standing in front of the door, one could see the Golden Gate Bridge, the Bay Bridge, and parts of Marin County headlands and the Berkeley Flats (that's not out of the ordinary—at the time, as a 19-year-old freshman, I was living in a sub-sub-basement with no address and a breathtaking view of the Bay from its little window).

In 1946, when I was shipping out of Seattle, Harry Smith was a legend among record collectors and jazz and country music enthusiasts that I met. People had been introduced to Lummi Midwinter Dances, which they called Spirit Dances, by Harry Smith. He had introduced blues record collectors to Jimmie Rodgers. He was reputed to have one of the finest, not the biggest, record collections that people knew. When he learned that I was going to attend UC

Berkeley, Bill Erickson, a high school friend in Pasadena who played trumpet and piano, urged me to look him up.

When I arrived at his door on a sunny afternoon in February 1948, he invited me in and told me to sit over there while he finished spraying his film. The little room, already crowded with bed, boxes serving as bookshelves and record shelves, boxes of things, piles of books and records, was festooned with yards of raw film adorned with little bits of masking tape in subtly changing shapes and sizes. Harry had a little jar of cinema dye in one hand and a fixative atomizer in his mouth, and blew the dye onto the film. This is what he told me later. At the time of first contact his behavior was completely mysterious. His work was done for a while. He had to wait for the cinema dye to set before he could take off the little bits of masking tape, rearrange them, add some, remove some.

Now we could talk about record collecting, blues, jazz, hillbilly music, gospel music. We shared a love for the records themselves as well as the music that was encoded in them. The labels, the record jackets, the catalogs, and the announcements from the early thirties and before were sensual tokens of the eras, and we felt, saw, and ►►►

smelled what the music was expressing. We also shared a sense of awe and discovery of beauty and the edge of something ineffable and profound around the music and its context. Harry communicated this to me, and of course the drugs helped a lot. Marijuana was the drug of choice, and Benzedrine, carried on the blotters in over-the-counter inhalers, helped us stay up longer to learn more from the records.

It's hard, fifty years later, to remember the order of business of those days. I was a dilatory student, more caught up in the music and record collecting and making sense out of what I was hearing than in the business of college. Harry was awesome: he presented a picture of total chaos and disorganization, but produced shimmering jewels of film. He was also a part of an artistic and intellectual world that I had not even known existed and had no way of appreciating.

I think I spent more time with Harry than I did in school. We went to old stores looking for records. One gold mine was in Richmond, an hour away by bus. Neither of us had much money, so our weekly trips there depended on the presence of cash. This little old store had shelves and shelves of records, all of them produced before 1930 and representing every style and tradition imaginable. And Harry knew them all—Yvette Guilbert, Torkel F. Scholander, Mexican Police bands, street organs playing operatic airs, Italian bagpipes, Asturian bagpipes—Harry introduced me to a whole new world that I probably would have missed in a quest for blues and old time country music. We would dream of getting enough money together to buy and store the whole store, but after two months of five to ten records a trip, the store and its inventory disappeared

without a trace. There were still a few thousand records to search, and they were all gone.

Since I was very shy and very straight and very innocent, I'm sure that Harry was disappointed in me for not living up to his expectations. He once scolded me for reading while he was talking to Bertrand Bronson, who was consulting with Harry about the music of versions of Child ballads performed by American "hillbilly" recording artists. But he recognized a willing ear, and the torrent of information, ideas, and gossip confused me and educated me.

When I first met him, Harry was working afternoon shift at Arameo in San Francisco, but he left that job soon after. He said that he didn't have to worry about money because he was set for unemployment compensation—he had told them that his occupation was duck decoy painter and that they had to find him an equivalent job, and they couldn't deny him the money. I think he really believed that, or at least he expected us to believe it. I used to meet him after work, and we would get high and go to jazz clubs or visit other record collectors, returning to Berkeley on the last E Train.

Two people were most often on our list—Bob Waller, who lived in the Monkey Block, and had an eclectic collection that included blues, jazz, country music, flamenco, Arabic, and African music, and Peter Tamony, a linguist, who collected blues records as examples of speech usage and context. (Thirty years later, Peter Tamony was probably the last Irishman to live at 24th and York Streets, in the heart of what is now a predominantly Latino district.) On more than a few visits, Harry would wheedle a record out of Bob or Peter. He "just wanted to borrow it for a few days." Harry was irresistible. The mark would hand over the record, knowing that he

"I think it was on my 29th birthday that I saw Harry Smith pull off one of his party tricks. I didn't know Harry, particularly, although I'd seen him on the stairs, going up to Allen's in the tenement on East 12th Street where I lived. I also shared a birthday with my friend and neighbor Rosebud, who was Harry's 'spiritual wife.' So Harry came to the party. He was rude in that preemptive way that small men sometimes assume, and he helped himself to a great deal of cake and bogarted all the reefers. Then he proposed a challenge: if we'd sing a verse of "Barbara Allen," he'd tell us what county we were born in. As it happened, the only person present who remembered the words was my then-girlfriend. After she sang, Harry instantly said, 'Bennington County, Vermont.' And he was right. It was news to me—I'd always thought she was born in Massachusetts.

The feat, as I came to realize, was *echt* Harry: it was a bit of genius musicology, but it seemed to go beyond that into the uncanny. So it is with the *Anthology*. I bought the volumes, one at a time, saving my pennies, initially because I was curious about Harry. When I heard them, though, I felt I'd been let in on some enormous secret. And that's one thing the *Anthology* constitutes: it is a philosophers' stone or a Rosetta Stone, a treasure map of an ancient and now-hidden America. In 1952, when its contents were only twenty or twenty-five years old, they must have already seemed ancient. Now

would never see it again. Sometimes he would trade a record, one that wasn't as valuable or interesting or was in worse condition. He did that with me also. One of the selections in his documentary *Anthology* is mine—Middle Georgia Singing Convention No. 1, "This Song of Love." His copy had a small check on the margin, my copy was in mint condition. He talked me into trading, by convincing me that his collection was more important than mine because his was a research collection. Since he had already convinced me that his collection was more important than Peter's or Bob's collection, I couldn't argue. I'm sure that anybody who had any contact with him has a similar story.

At the same time that Harry was immensely protective of the record collection and greedy about getting more records, I had the impression that he considered himself more the custodian than the owner of these records. He hinted few times that the Collection was going to go to an institution to be curated. Certainly he was more protective of the records than of anything else in his room. He would lend out books that he thought you might want, gave away paintings and collages, but once a record came into his room it never left. He would bring records over to my room to play, but he would never let me borrow them, even as he would borrow or try to borrow records from other people.

Some time in the fall of 1948 Harry moved from Berkeley to San Francisco, to a room over Jackson's Nook, a famous after-hours spot in the Fillmore District. He now was making intricate paintings, faintly reminiscent of Kandinsky, which were meant to be watched to music. Harry would set the painting, approximately 3 feet by 4 feet, on an easel, and put a Dizzy Gillespie or Perez Prado

record on the phonograph. He would then stand to one side of the painting, long pointer in hand, slightly huddled over, and formally point to one small area after another in succession as the music progressed. He announced that this was a new art form. Time and events were in a linear progression and happening all at once at the same time. This was also the time that Harry was commissioned to paint murals on the walls in a nearby club, Bop City. This was on the corner of Geary and Fillmore. I don't know what happened to the murals after Bop City became a Mosque. The budding was razed during the 'redevelopment' of the area.

This may not have much meaning for what you're doing, but I want to get it off my chest. Harry's aesthetic was very complex, and I have to thank him for giving me some insight into it. The formal attributes only had meaning or attraction or beauty as they accompanied and were accompanied by historical, cultural, psychological context. The possibility that contexts could be manufactured or manipulated only added spice to the aesthetic. Harry gave the impression that he was jumping from interest to interest, that he was intellectually fickle. But one of his friends, I think it was Jordan Belson, said that Harry could grasp the fundamental points of a system very easily, and once that was done, the challenge to learn about it was gone. He was also meticulous about detail and aware that the whole was immanent in its parts. Thus he incorporated a vernacular confessional magazine, *Negro Achievements*, into his sensibilities about blues. *Hobo News*, gospel literature, record catalogues, also contributed to a matrix for appreciating and understanding the music.

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the culture they represent has entirely disappeared from the acknowledged face of the nation, although, as Greil Marcus has pointed out, it continues to lurk in its subconscious, the secret sharer of its violence and yearning.

The *Anthology* is certainly far from being just a bunch of good songs. It led me to seek out more of the same, and there is plenty; I'm still looking for stray numbers by Buell Kazee, and I don't know whether Harry considered putting in Washington Phillips and decided against it, and did the Alabama Sacred Harp Singers ever record anything else? But all of that is off the point: the *Anthology* is a work of art, rounded and complete unto itself. Other anthologies are good or not, historical or aesthetic, instructive or inspiring, nicely sequenced or random, but even the best ones are merely collections. The *Anthology* is, like Harry's films, a brilliant montage. It can be considered both as a late milestone in the folk-lyric stream of tradition and as a pioneer work of post-modernism. And it is an essential element of American culture, deserving of a place on the narrow shelf between *Huckleberry Finn* and Walker Evans's *American Pictures*. Every twelve-year-old should have a copy." —LUC SANTE, May 1997

He said, "Look, this is what I want to do. I want to lay out the book of notes. I want to do the whole thing. All I want to be sure of is that they are issued."

# The Birth and Growth of the Anthology of American Folk Music

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As told by Moses Asch

IT'S A LONG STORY. I started making records in 1939. The company was then known as Asch Records. During the war, shellac was confined to manufacturers who were in business before 1939 so I combined with Stinson who had the production but needed the titles. In 1945, Stinson and I parted.

Came the end of the war, there was a boom here. At that time we paid \$10,000 to an artist, and Disc had the top jazz artists. We issued *Jazz at the Philharmonic* in close cooperation with Norman Grantz, who lent me the money to do it. Grantz later retired a millionaire when he used the money from his Verve records to buy Picassos by the square inch.

But by 1947, I went bankrupt for \$300,000 and started Folkways Records. People who were involved in folk music between 1939 and 1947 knew what I was doing. I was the only one during those years who was documenting and issuing anything of consequence. In those days there was a union strike, and nobody wanted to hire musicians, so they came to me. The GI's were coming back

from the war bringing songs. Pete Seeger came back then with a war and anti-army songs that talked about the lieutenant who was selling shoes to the private; songs also about the housing, the price and all that business.

So when I started issuing records again in 1947, this man, the closest I guess to Woody Guthrie as a character, came to see me. I had heard about me. His name was Harry Smith.

Actually, his interest was originally in the American Indians of the Northwest. That's how he became interested in music as such, he documented very early. During the War, because he was so smart he was able to mount the guns in the fuselages of airplanes. He got extra pay, and with all that money bought up records. That was at the same time when I bought my collection of 78s—a very large one.

Before the war, the record companies themselves decided which records would be allocated to dealers. The dealer, in order to have a Columbia franchise, for example, would have to take whatever Columbia sent him. Those were the monopolistic days. Naturally, the hillbilly stuff, the country music and all of that had to accept here (in N.Y.)—two of each or three of each.

Then we had the shellac shortage during the War—Asia was cut off and they were using boats for other things than shellac. So in order to get shellac, the big companies offered eighteen or twenty cents for all the records that dealers had in stock. New York Band and Instrument and all the other dealers that I used to pick up records from had tables full of this stuff—the greatest music in the world — and New Yorkers knew nothing about it. Right?

Harry Smith had the same thing on the West Coast. He bought up thousands of records. He knew what he was doing because all this time he kept track of when the records were recorded and who recorded them. In those days, they issued catalogs that gave the date, the matrix number and the place of the session. In the early Victor and Columbia days, the dealer had all this information.

Harry Smith collected vast information. In addition to that, he is an intellect. He understood the content of the records. He knew their relationship to folk music, their relationship to English literature, and their relationship to the world.

He came to me with this vast collection of records. He needed money desperately. All his life he needed money. He got it from the Guggenheims, or he got it from me or from others. He always needed money because he was always experimenting in the movies. He is quite a well-known movie creator. That's an expensive thing to work with.

Out of his collection, he came to me and said: "Look, this is what I want to do. I want to lay out the book of notes. I want to do the whole thing. All I want to be sure of is that they are issued." Of course, I was tremendously interested.

Harry did the notes, typed up the notes, pasted up the notes, did the whole work. He and I discussed the layout, but he laid out the whole thing. You know, he is very nice to work with. He is very thorough. He knew the material. He knew when it was recorded and he can name the people on the record.

The sad part of it is that afterwards when I wanted to issue volumes IV and V we ran into the problem of everybody wanting to get into the act and nobody issuing a thing. The last effort was John Cohen and Sam Charters, but both of them dropped the project. It was not pressure from other companies. Those people have never influenced me one way or the other. The real reason is I couldn't get the documentation.

The records were not available anymore. Harry had sold them to the New York Public Library—half of them. The other half I bought, and Sam Charters went through them, and we issued some of the things from the collection—Cajun and others on the RBF\* label.

No one knew the background of each record. Harry Smith disappeared. Then he started working on finger string games. Then he started working with the Seminole people. And now he is doing very well with moving pictures, so he dropped the whole project. Nobody picked it up at all. This is the horror.

It is all on tape. The problem is that Harry needed the records which were sent to the New York Public Library. The Library just taped it with no documentation at all and nobody has been able to reconstruct it. I have the tapes of Volumes IV and V, but I can't get the documentation. There is no sense in just issuing it without the documentation.

The most important thing is the influence of the *Anthology* on people. It has been a take-off point for many of the younger musicians like Dave Bromberg, people like that. For the documenters, the *Anthology* has set a standard. It's rather interesting that when the White House wanted to get a record collection, the first record they ordered was the *Anthology*.

Pete Seeger just went to Asia. He took a plane and even with all that weight he took the *Anthology*. Harold Leventhal went to India and took the *Anthology* with him. When people are interested in American folk music, it is one of the best examples.

Wherever I go, the first thing they ask me is: "Is it still in print? Is the *Anthology of American Folk Music* still in print?"

Yes!!

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From an interview with Ethel Raim and Bob Norman, March 22, 1972.

Excerpted from *Sing Out!* Magazine 26(1) and 26(2).

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\*Records Books Films, a subsidiary label of Folkways founded in the early 1960s, that reissued historic recordings of the 1920s and 1930s.

## HANDBOOK TO THE ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC

Enclosed is a facsimile of Harry Smith's original handbook, which he composed, designed and laid out himself. There have been several reprintings since the original edition, each with changes in art, copy, and design. This reproduction is faithful to Harry's creation.

It has been produced with the same reprographic methods in use at the time of the original edition: film negatives were shot with a photostat camera from a printed copy of the 1952 handbook because the original mechanical boards had been lost.

We did no retouching or cleaning up and made no changes to the original art or copy.

Offset plates were then made from these negatives, and paper was selected to match the original.

The result is a reproduction which is as close as possible to the original artifact.

# Notes on Harry Smith's Anthology

Neil V. Rosenberg

Memorial University of Newfoundland  
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Like a bibliographer who annotates selected books, discographer Harry Smith in his “Foreword” sets the recordings he has culled into a social and historical context. He uses record numbers—created by publishers for tracking inventory, deployed by discographers as an analytic vocabulary, and revered by collectors as icons—as well as individual performance titles to identify the data.

But like many other scholars and enthusiasts Smith doesn't explain what he means by “folk song” or tell how he knows which titles are and which are not “folk.” It's a mystery, too, how he selected performances from the Berliner catalogue, which did not have a “folk

song” series. Smith must have first identified likely titles in someone's collection, listened to them, and chosen the four he speaks of. According to Paul Charosh, who recently published a Berliner discography, one of the four discs, 3012, is known only through Smith's listing and cannot be found in any extant collection. Smith does not mention that Cousins and Demoss, the performers on this disc, were among the first African-American musicians to record.

Situating himself at the intersection of folk music scholarship and the record business, he speaks with the authority of an informed listener who believes he knows authentic folk performances. His understanding is clearly

shaped by the history of the record industry as a whole. Commercial audio recordings had been available since before the turn of the century, but until the 1920s they typically reflected the tastes of the urban middle class to whom the recordings were marketed. Most records in these years carried performances from vaudeville, Broadway, Tin Pan Alley, brass bands, opera, and other genres of the popular culture of the time. As Smith says, some folk materials appeared in record companies' catalogues from the very beginning. But such recordings usually presented their performances as self-conscious examples of other peoples' lives and musics. The modern era Smith speaks of represented a new set of practices.

In the early 1920s, sales of a new technology, the radio, caused phonograph and record sales to drop. Record companies sought new markets. Because phonographs cost less than radios and didn't require electricity, they could be sold more easily to working-class consumers. Recent immigrants, factory workers, and farm families could afford this older and thus cheaper modern entertainment technology. But they would only buy phonographs if there were records to hear on them that appealed to their tastes. What followed is told by Smith through Ralph Peer's narrative of his 1923 experience with Fiddlin' John Carson, taken from a 1938 *Collier's* magazine article, “Thar's Gold in Them Hillbillies.” It's quoted without qualification by Smith because the historical research didn't begin until the late 1950s that would make evident Peer's exaggeration (Carson's record sold well but not that well; only a few hillbilly records—by Jimmie Rodgers and Vernon Dalhart—sold 500,000 copies in the 1920s) and his oversimplification

(Polk Brockman, the “local dealer” in Atlanta, played a bigger role than Peer indicates). Peer's success led record companies to create generic series for marketing such recordings to working-class Whites. These series were at first given various names like “old-time music” or “old familiar tunes,” but eventually they were called “hillbilly” from one of Peer's popular recording bands. Other series produced for ethnic and regional groups like the Cajuns of Louisiana reflected the same search for markets by New York-based companies like Okeh, Victor, and Columbia. Employed by these companies, Peer and others like him — talent scouts called “Artists and Repertoire” or “A & R” men — traveled with recording equipment to hinterland cities, particularly in the Southeast and Southwest. They advertised auditions and got advice from music retailers about locally popular musicians.

One of these series had a slightly different history. By 1920 Peer had discovered that recordings of African-American singers sold well to African-Americans, so his company, Okeh, initiated a separate series. It was called “race,” an in-group term at the time (used frequently in the *Chicago Defender*) that was not considered demeaning and preferred to “Negro” by many African-Americans. Until 1926, almost all Black performers on record were popular stage performers. Artists like Bessie Smith — female vaudeville blues singers with jazz styled accompanists — dominated these series in sales and numbers of titles. But in 1926 things changed rather dramatically when J. Mayo Williams, an African-American A & R man for Paramount Records of Chicago, acting on a tip from a Texas record seller, brought street singer Blind Lemon Jefferson to Chicago to re- ➤➤➤

"I didn't know Harry very well. I made it a point to avoid him unless I was drunk. So I sort of forgot all my best stories. But I am here to acknowledge a debt of honor that I, and my whole generation, owe to Harry because of that *Anthology*, which was the Bible for hundreds of us, or more. Without that, a whole lot of things never would have happened in this country musically. I think of it as the Neo-ethnic revival of the 1950s and 60s. Instead of handling folk music as if they were art songs, people tried to do them with some of the flavor of the originals. And without the originals to listen to, that's kind of hard to do...[The *Anthology*] all of a sudden gave them a wide circulation. I think it really changed music in this country."

—DAVE VAN RONK, transcribed from comments at the Harry Smith memorial, February 9, 1992

cord him. His best-selling records sent other companies out hunting for more "down-home" sounds, and created the popular image of blues performers as solo singer-guitarists. Around the same time, down-home African-American religious sermons and music took over in popularity from the relatively more formal quartets previously heard.

Surveying the results of this market-driven musical populism in his "Foreword," Smith suggests that this activity produced a body of recordings reflecting "regional qualities" soon to be eradicated by the forces of modernity—the "phonograph, radio and talking pictures." He argued that records documented "style"—aspects of music "unknowable through written transcriptions," and that they conveyed "musics of groups living in mutual social and cultural isolation." The first claim is indisputable: records could convey indescribable features of performance style, personal nuances which could be learned impersonally by listening repeatedly. But the idea of social and cultural isolation in the historical past is an oversimplification. "Local types" have always integrated with other cultural models. This sort of change is constant and was happening in musical systems before records, radios, and movies arrived. Ironically, present knowledge about this recorded music is greater largely because Harry Smith's anthology stimulated the research. Today, his comments

on cultural isolation need qualification.

Some who recorded for these race, hillbilly, and ethnic series were full-time professionals in vaudeville or radio. Most were not, though. They were experienced public performers of vernacular music whose previous audiences were local or regional. Most included in their repertoire some venerable old songs and tunes that a few of the more open-minded scholars of the time recognized as folk music. Indeed, in 1940 Alan Lomax, fresh from groundbreaking field recording work for the Library of Congress with his father John and other researchers like Zora Neale Hurston, listened to 3,000 of the race and hillbilly records issued in the twenties and thirties and published an annotated list of 350 titles (including many of the performers and selections in this set) as "List of American Folk Songs on Commercial Records." Lomax's annotations represented his own judgments: "imp" (important), "vf" (very fine), "trad," "ver" (version), and so forth. Smith, more modest and precise in his scholarship than Lomax, references printed folksong collections in his annotations. Like Lomax, his judgments about what to include were informed by a sense of traditional performance styles and contexts.

But few of the performers in these series of the late 1920s performed just "folk" stuff. Most also included renditions of popular tunes, new and old, as well as their own compositions.

Some artists recorded only once, for if their records did not sell well, they were not invited to record again. Few were prepared for the demands of the record companies for new and unique material at every recording session. By the early thirties these series had produced some best-sellers. But the connections that we expect today between hit records, personal appearances, and media exposure were infrequent. For example, although the Carter Family's recordings were national best-sellers, until 1938 the Family toured only sporadically and locally in the upper South, appearing at schools, churches, and movie houses. In 1938 they began wintering in Del Rio, Texas, and broadcasting from extremely powerful radio stations just over the border in Mexico. Of the artists included in this anthology, the Carters were an exception in that they recorded every year but one from 1927 to 1942, the year before their act broke up. Most of the others heard here stopped recording long before that. In the early thirties as the Depression deepened, record sales dropped, some of the companies went under or were restructured, A & R men traveled less, and recording activity dwindled.

What the companies had created through these recordings remained, though: a new segment of the music entertainment industry, one in which local and regional working-class musicians could extend their markets beyond the earshot of in-person performances. From

the mid-1930s on, as recording began again, the musics of this segment steadily grew more professionalized. By the 1940s records were creating revenue in new ways—through electric juke boxes and radio disc jockeys. Performers toured, broadcast, and made movies in support of their recordings. By 1952, when Smith compiled the *Anthology*, "Race" had become "Rhythm and Blues," and "Hillbilly," "Country and Western." Record companies were no longer concentrated in New York; new "independent" companies specialized in R & B and C & W. Performers who survived the depression and those who followed them in the 1940s were more knowing about business practices than their predecessors. They learned about music publishing, and when ASCAP, the old New York music publishing clearinghouse, refused to take them seriously, they created their own successful rival, BMI. With the control this brought over publishing revenues, they developed repertoires that gave them royalties—for newly composed songs and tunes, for the most part—and music trade magazines began tracking R & B and C & W hits on weekly charts. 78s were still being manufactured but 45s were gradually replacing them, and the new long-playing 33 1/3 microgroove records were taking over middle-class markets. The music industry had developed so rapidly by catering to and changing popular tastes that the thirty-year-old recordings Smith had



collected now seemed obscure.

Indeed, many of the recordings were rare to start with. Often the companies had lost the master recordings or recycled the pressing parts for scrap during the war years. Although some of the musicians on these records were still remembered, only a few were still actively performing. The companies that originally recorded them—if they still existed—saw no market for republishing their recordings.

So like many reissues of old 78s in the post-war years by independent record companies, Smith's *Anthology* was a "pirate"—the recordings were not licensed from the original manufacturers; the performers were not paid for their use. Initially Folkways owner Moe Asch felt this was unnecessary, believing the companies had given up their rights by destroying the masters and not keeping the recordings in print. Ultimately Folkways did license some of the recordings, and, with this reissue, all are licensed. But this hardly seemed an issue in 1952, when Smith altruistically compiled his examples of folk music by early commercial recording artists. In calling it folk music he sought to avoid the marketing categories associated with skin color, ethnicity, and region, choosing instead a classification scheme based on formal and contextual features: ballads, social music, and songs. Smith's understanding was shaped in part by published folk music books, which took for granted the idea of the "social isolation" of the "folk" while focusing their analysis almost exclusively on texts.

Marketed as folk music, this set was bought and listened to by a generation born, for the most part, after the recordings were made. Mainly urban and middle-class, they wanted to experience authentic folk music, and

this fed their appetites. In spite of many differences in accent, style, instrumentation, and so forth, the performances bore certain similarities. For example, singers and musicians used to singing and playing without amplification sounded forceful and piercing because that was how voices carried best when one was trying to reach an audience without using a microphone. In the 1930s, microphone singing led to the nuanced crooning of pop singers like Bing Crosby; by the early 1950s all popular music singers depended on the microphone to carry their voice, and this made the old vocal approaches sound odd. If their voices were exotic, so too were their instruments. In the 1950s the guitar was just becoming the favorite instrument of teenagers, and it was played on these recordings in ways that weren't in instruction books. Added to this was the fact that standards of recording speed in the twenties had varied, so that some of the recordings were faster than the actual performance, giving them an unnaturally shrill and hurried sound. Technicians at Smithsonian Folkways have worked to correct this on the current reissue.

Smith's mixing of hillbilly, race, and Cajun performances took on new meaning for younger listeners during the 1950s. This was the era in which rock and roll was born, a time marked by unexpected crossovers between the previously discrete series. C & W singer Elvis Presley's first single included his cover of R & B singer Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup's "That's All Right," while R & B singer Chuck Berry developed his first hit, "Maybelline," from C & W singer Roy Acuff's "Ida Red." Young White teens heard recordings of bluesmen like Muddy Waters on WLAC in Nashville and ordered their favorites from Randy's Record Shop in Gallatin; they

heard bluegrass bands like Flatt and Scruggs on the Grand Ole Opry and ordered records from Jimmie Skinner Music Center in Cincinnati. By the time they discovered the Smith *Anthology*, it seemed like a retrospective crossover collection to them; the juxtaposition and mixing of performances from those carefully segregated series mirrored their own collections of 45s and LPs.

By the late 1950s Smith's *Anthology* had become a central part of the modern American folk music canon. It stimulated a new wave of amateur ("for the love of it") interest in the subject. During the 1960s folk revival performers recorded their versions of its songs, many of which entered the contemporary hootenanny repertoires learned and performed by young enthusiasts unaware of their source. More scholarly types studied Smith's fascinating notes, wondering what had happened to Mississippi John Hurt, Clarence Ashley, Furry Lewis, and the others. Like the Coasters, they began searching, and found some of them. New recordings were made, and some were brought to folk music festivals at Newport, Philadelphia, UCLA, and elsewhere. Record collectors began to look for other recordings by the performers on the *Anthology* and to compile discographies of them. These stimulated biographical research. Thus, for example, "The Masked Marvel" was unmasked as Charley Patton, a Mississippi singer who died in 1934, now canonized as "the father of the Delta blues." Today Patton, like many of the performers on this set, is the subject of books, articles, and reissue recordings. These aftershocks from the *Anthology's* initial impact not only sent American popular music in new directions, but also expanded our knowledge about the varied musical cultures in which so much of the

industry is rooted.

Harry Smith "discovered" vernacular art at America's social margins, and he mixed it in a melting pot *Anthology* of distinctive regional, local, and idiosyncratic forms. Naming it American Folk Music suggested a collectivity that appealed to a significant part of the public. Today we may deconstruct it and interpret it from many sides but we cannot deny its central role in shaping American popular music.

END

# Supplemental Notes on the Selections

Jeff Place

Compiling historical notes on the artists of the *Anthology* has been a fascinating experience. Some are quite well known and thoroughly documented while others are so obscure that my detective work didn't turn up much of anything for them. Some artists like the Carter Family recorded hundreds of songs, which found their way into many American homes. Others like Didier Hébert and J.P. Nestor only had one recording session and were never documented again.

The artists who make up the *Anthology*—the denizens of Greil Marcus' *Smithville*—are a diverse array, from street hustlers to Baptist ministers. Some lived to see old age, but many died young. Most were born in the last three decades of the 19th century, and their recorded

performances are frequently the only representations we have of the styles of that era.

The hardship and tragedy in many of their lives is striking. Harry Smith wrote nothing about the artists, preferring their anonymity, but in these notes, you find out as much about them as we know.

These song annotations do not replace Harry Smith's valuable 1952 booklet; they are intended to supplement it. Like Smith's text, the following annotations are dense with information. They present personal portraits, social landscapes and historical perspectives intended to lead you on your own to find more about the artists, the songs, and the forces that produced them. In the years since the 1950s, zealous record collectors and discographers have spent

countless hours pursuing the history of what has been called the "Golden Age" of recording. Many other record companies now are in the business of reissuing the music from this period with detailed liner notes. Books, articles and Ph.D. dissertations have been written about the artists and the songs. The fruits of all of this labor are out there for the seeing and hearing.

In 1952 when the *Anthology* was first issued by Folkways owner Moses Asch and Harry Smith, LPs (long-playing records) were a brand new, revolutionary technology. It allowed the listener to experience a number of songs without having to get up intermittently to change the record. It also allowed these 84 songs to be concentrated together on six discs with Smith's extensive descriptions. In 1997, we hope that this edition of the *Anthology* can also take advantage of revolutionary new tech-

also of being accessed in a computer CD-ROM drive to display video, photographs, graphics and additional information on the *Anthology*. You can link from the E-CD to the web site. Hopefully, the new *Anthology* will evolve with new channels for exchanging information and will serve as a model for presenting important audio recordings to an interested public.

A brief biography of the artist and information about the song are included where known and not already covered in Smith's notes. A selected discography and bibliography are included as are selected recordings of the song by other artists created both before and after the referenced recording. Abbreviations used for formats are: a= LP; b=78; c=compact disc; d=cassette tape. I have divided the versions by musical style to give the reader some sense of a song's

The song annotations follow the pattern below:

SELECTION #	} "HENRY LEE"	Recording location:	
1		Dick Justice	recording date when known.
BR 367	}	CHICAGO: MAY 20, 1929.	Personnel on the song, and the instruments they can be heard playing (information updates Smith's notes as necessary).
		Dick Justice, vocal and guitar.	
		Record label (key to abbreviations appears at the end of the notes)	

nologies. The 1952 world of published books and records that are frozen in form can now be expanded by the Internet, where a Harry Smith *Anthology* web page will make these notes available in a more extensive and ever-changing version, capable of being corrected and supplemented with text, photos, sound and video in a discourse of feedback and sharing.

Additionally, disc six of this set is an Enhanced CD, capable not only of being played as an audio disc in a compact disc player, but

provenience, recognizing, of course, that people hold different opinions about the use and usefulness of these categories.

I encourage you to sit down with this recording and its notes and experience the *Anthology* deeply, as others before you have. It is our music at a very different time.

SELECTION

1

"HENRY LEE"

Dick Justice  
CHICAGO: MAY 20, 1929.  
Dick Justice, vocal and guitar.

BR 367

Richard "Dick" Justice (1906–1950s) was from Logan County, WV. He was influenced both by blues records he heard during the 1920s (Russell 1973: p.23) and the Black musicians he was known to play with near his home. His ten recordings for Brunswick Records in 1929 were a mixture of Anglo-American ballads and African-American blues and are as likely to turn up on blues anthologies as on folk. Justice's style is similar to that of his neighbor Frank Hutchison (selection 19), with whom he played on occasion. He spent most of his life working as a coal miner.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY JUSTICE see the collections *A Collection of Mountain Blues* CTY 511a; *Home in West Virginia* OH 177a; *Crumb* Rykodisc 10322c; and *Mister Charlie's Blues* YZ 1024c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT JUSTICE see Russell 1973.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as Henry Lee by

Peggy Seeger PRS 13005a; as Lady Margot and Love Henry by John Jacob Niles TRD 1046a; as Love Henry by Bob Dylan COL 57590c. **Country/String Band:** as Lowe Bonnie by Darby and Tarlton CTY 3503c. **Bluegrass:** as Henry Lee by Dave Evans and River Bend REB 1616d; as Young Hunting by Earl Taylor and the Stony Mountain Boys RR 242a. **Rock:** as Henry Lee by PJ Harvey, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds REP 46195c.

SELECTION

2

"FATAL FLOWER GARDEN"

Nelstone's Hawaiians  
ATLANTA, GA: NOVEMBER 30, 1929.  
Hubert Nelson, vocal and steel guitar; James D. Touchstone, vocal and guitar.

VIC 40193

Little is known of this group, obviously named by combining its members' surnames. From southern Alabama, they were the first in the area to use a steel guitar (Wolfe telephone conversation 4/97) and to record the country music standard "Just Because." During the 1920s recordings featuring Hawaiian guitar became quite popular.

Similar to the sound of bottleneck guitar technique, the "crying" of electric steel guitars is still an important part of country and western music. Hawaiian guitars caught on domestically shortly after Hawaii's entrance into the American empire in the years preceding World War I (Malone 1985: p.26). Hawaiian Frank Ferera came to the United States in 1914 as part of the Panama Pacific Exhibition and claims to have introduced the instrument on the mainland (Malone 1985: p.64).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF NELSON AND TOUCHSTONE see the collection *Oh My Little Darling: Folk Song Types* NW 245a.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **British:** as Fatal Flower Garden by Peggy Seeger ARG 70a; as Sir Hugh by Ewan MacColl and A.L. Lloyd RVR 12-621a.

SELECTION

3

"THE HOUSE CARPENTER"

Clarence Ashley  
ATLANTA, GA: APRIL 14, 1930.  
Clarence Ashley, vocal and banjo.

COL 15654

Clarence "Tom" Ashley (1895–1967), from Shouns in East Tennessee, recorded alternately as Clarence or Tom for different record companies. Early in his career, he traveled with medicine shows, and in the 1920s and 1930s he acted as front man in many of the groups he played with, mixing humor with music. Ashley played with the Carolina Tar Heels (selections 12, 27), The Blue Ridge Mountain Entertainers, Byrd Moore and the Hot Shots, and Ashley's Melody Men. After his initial recording career ended, he made a living sawmilling, farming, and what he called "busting" (passing the hat for money) (Rinzler 1994).

By the mid-1940s Ashley had stopped playing banjo because of a hand injury. Scholar-musician Ralph Rinzler happened to see Ashley in 1960 at the Union Grove (NC) Fiddler's Convention. Remembering Ashley from Smith's *Anthology*, he asked to record him, and the subsequent recording session also introduced Rinzler to the brilliant guitarist Arthel "Doc" Watson. This meeting led to Ashley's second career playing at colleges, festivals, and nightclubs during the folk revival.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY ASHLEY see *Look Who's Coming: The Original Carolina Tar Heels* OH 113a; *The Original Folkways Recordings of Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley* SF 40029c; *Tom Ashley and Tex Isley* FW 2350c; and on the collections *Before the Blues*, V. 3 YZ 2017c; *White Country Blues, 1926–1938* COL 47466c; *Friends of Old Time Music* FW 2390c; *Galax, Virginia Old Time Fiddlers Convention* FW 2435c; *Harmonica Blues* YZ 1053c; *Old Time Mountain Ballads* CTY 3505c; *Old Time Music at Newport* VG 121/2c; and *Ragtime #2: The Country* FW RBF18c. For additional information on Ashley see Rinzler 1994.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as House Carpenter by Texas Gladden LC L1a; Sarah Ogan Gunning RND 0051a; Doug and Jack Wallin SF 40013c; The Watson Family SF 40012c; as Well Met, Well Met by Pearl Jacobs Borusky LC

AFSL58a; as The Ship Carpenter by Clay Walters LC AFS58a.

**Folksong Revival:** as House Carpenter by Joan Baez VG 41/42c, VG 79/80c, VG 2122c; Sheila Clark FW 31110c; Bob Dylan COL 47382c; The Harvesters FW 2406c; as House Carpenter's Wife by Joan O'Bryant FW 2338c. **Country/String Band:** as The House Carpenter by The Carolina Tar Heels VIC 40219b. **Bluegrass:** as House Carpenter by Tony Rice SGH 3732c. **British:** as House Carpenter by Pentangle SH 79078c. **Irish:** as House Carpenter by Daithi Sproule GL 1123c.

SELECTION

4

"DRUNKARD'S SPECIAL"

Coley Jones  
DALLAS, TX: DECEMBER 6, 1929.  
Coley Jones, vocal and guitar.

COL 14489

Between 1927 and 1929 Coley Jones made seven recordings for Columbia as a solo artist and ten as a member of the Dallas String Band, which also included guitarist Sam Harris and bassist Marco Washington. Before this, Jones performed in minstrel shows. Afterwards, he fronted the Coley Jones String Band, in which the legendary Texas blues guitarist Aaron "T-Bone" Walker got his start. ➤➤➤➤➤

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY JONES see *Coley Jones and the Dallas String Band, 1927–1929: Complete Recordings* Matchbox 208a; and the collections *Roots 'N Blues* COL 47911c; *Ragtime #2—The Country* FW RBF 18c; *Maple Leaf Rag* NW 235a; *Texas Blues* Roots 312a; *Early Mandolin Classics* RND 1050c; and *Before the Blues, V. 3* YZ 2017c; as by the Dallas String Band on the collections, *Jazz, V. 1* FW 2801c; and *Before the Blues, V. 2* YZ 2016c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON JONES see Minton 1983.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as *Four Nights Drunk* by Sheila Adams Barnhill, Granny Dell 3107d; Jean and Lee Schilling TRL 617a; as *Good Old Man* by John Jacob Niles TRD 1046a; as *Intoxicated Rat* by Doc Watson VG 155/8c; as *Our Goodman* by Orrin Rice LC AFSL12a; as *Three Nights Drunk* by The Blue Ridge Buddies (E.C. and Orna Ball) SF 40097c. **Folksong Revival:** as *Five Nights Drunk* by The Seeger Sisters PRS 13029a; as *Four Nights Drunk* by The Delaware Water Gap ADE

2004a; as *Intoxicated Rat* by Cisco Houston SF 40059c; as *Our Goodman* by Sam Hinton DEC 8108a; as *Three Nights Drunk* by Grant Rogers FL 27d; as *You Old Fool* by The Weavers VG 147/50c.

**Country/String Band:** as *Cabbage Head* by Sam McGee DLY 1009a; as *Four Nights Drunk* by The New Lost City Ramblers FW 5263c; as *Intoxicated Rat* by Maybelle Carter with the New Lost City Ramblers VG 183a; as *Three Nights Experience* by John B. Evans AU 22020b, OH 177a. **Bluegrass:** as *Cabbage Head* by Clint Howard and Fred Price PH 1028a; as *Intoxicated Rat* by Benny Martin GS 1415a. **Blues:** as *Cat Man Blues* by Blind Lemon Jefferson PAR 12921b. **Rhythm and Blues:** as *Intoxicated Rat* by Brook Benton MER 60641a. **New Orleans:** as *Cabbage Head* by Dr. John WB 26940; Professor Longhair RND 2057c. **British:** as *Four Nights Drunk* by Steeleye Span CHR 1121a, SH 79047c; as *Our Goodman* by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger FW 3509c, RVR 12-621/2a; Tony Wales FW 3515c.

low Kentuckian Bradley Kincaid. Kazez had formal musical training and approached his performances as voice recitals. His repertoire included sentimental songs, and he frequently insisted they be included in his recordings and programs (Russell 1976b: p.17). Kazez recorded 58 songs for Brunswick during 1927–1929 and an LP for Folkways in 1958. He had a precise, Appalachian clawhammer style of banjo playing.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF KAZEZ see *Buell Kazez* JA 0009a; *Buell Kazez Sings and Plays* FW 3810c; and the collections *Old Time Mountain Ballads* CTY 3504c; *Old Time Ballads* CTY 3505c; *Old Time Music from Kentucky* RND 1037a; *Folk Song America* SI 046c; and *Before the Blues, V.1* YZ 2015c. For additional information on Kazez see Bluestein 1992; Bowen 1970; Bussard et al. 1972; [N. Cohen] 1970; Jones 1978; Russell 1976b.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as *The Butcher Boy* by Joan O'Bryant FW 2314; Almeda Riddle RND 0017a; and a more recent version by Buell Kazez FW 3810c; as *Go Dig My Grave* by Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson SF 40005c.

**Folksong Revival:** as *The Butcher Boy* by Steve Camacho CK 1127c; Sam Hinton FW 2401c; *Schooner Fare, Outer Green* 8878c; Peggy Seeger FW 2049c; as *The Railroad Boy* by Joan Baez VG 41/42a, VG 2097a. **Country/String Band:** as *The Butcher Boy* by The Blue Sky Boys RCA 5525a; Kelly Harrell BRI 002a, VIC 19563b, VIC 20242b; as *The Fatal Courtship* by Ephraim Woodie OT 102a; as *In London City Where I Did Dwell* by Roscoe Holcomb FW 2374c; Morgan Sexton JA 0055c; as *Railroad Lover* by George Reneau VOC 15194b. **Bluegrass:** as *Butcher Boy* by Dan Crary SGH 3707c; The Lilly Brothers RND SS02a. **Irish:** as *The Butcher Boy* by The Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem COL 2265a. **Scottish:** as *The Butcher Boy* by Jeannie Robertson RVR 12-633a.

SELECTION

5

“OLD LADY AND THE DEVIL”

Bill and Belle Reed

JOHNSON CITY, TN: OCTOBER 17, 1928.

COL 15336D

Bill Reed, vocal and guitar; Belle Reed, guitar.

Probably from Virginia or Kentucky, the Reeds apparently had only one recording session for Columbia in Johnson City, to which it is thought all the artists came from the nearby region. The Reeds also recorded two songs with their children. Belle Reed should not be confused with Ola Belle Reed, who made many later recordings.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** See as *The Farmer's Curs't Wife* by Sheila Adams Barnhill, Granny Dell 3107d; E.C. and Orna Ball ATL 82496c; Horton Barker FW 2362c, LC L1a, LC AFSL1a; Joe Hubbard BRI 002a; Andrew Rowan Summers FW 2021c; as *Old Woman and the Devil* by John Jacob Niles TRD 1046a; as *The Devil and the Farmer's Wife* by Hobart Smith FL 17a; Doc Watson VG 2115a. **Folksong Revival:** see as *The Devil and the Farmer's Wife* by Richard Dyer-Bennet DYB 13c, VG 6007a; John McCutcheon JA 003a; as *The Devil and the Farmer by*

Burl Ives COL 6058a; as *The Farmer's Curs'd Wife* by Patrick Sky VG 79207a; as *the Farmer's Curs't Wife* by Ted Ashlaw PH 1022a; Paul Clayton FW 2110c; Sam Eskin CK 1020c; Anne Grimes FW 5217c; Spider John Koerner RDH 44c; Pete Seeger FW 2319c. **Post Revival:** as *The Devil and the Farmer's Wife* by Hesperus, Golden Apple 7553c; Bruce Hutton MMC 9040d. **Country/String Band:** as *The Devil and the Farmer's Wife* by West Orrtanna String Band RVH 932a. **Bluegrass:** as *the Farmer's Curs'd Wife* by Tim O'Brien SGH 3808c. **British:** as *The Devil and the Farmer's Wife* by Frankie Armstrong SRR 4211a.

SELECTION

6

“THE BUTCHER'S BOY”

Buell Kazez

NEW YORK: JANUARY 16, 1928.

BR 213A

Buell Kazez, vocal and banjo.

Born in Burton's Fork, KY, Buell Kazez (1900–1976) was a Baptist minister in Lexington and a scholar-performer of Appalachian folk songs much like North Carolinian Bascom Lamar Lunsford and fel-

SELECTION

7

“THE WAGONER'S LAD”

Buell Kazez

NEW YORK: JANUARY 18, 1928.

BR 213B

Buell Kazez, vocal and banjo.

See selection 6.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as *Wagoner's Lad* by Obray Ramsey PRS 13020a; Mr. and Mrs. Sams SF 40077c; and a more recent version by Buell Kazez FW 3810c; as *Loving Nancy* by Betty Garland FW 2307c; Sarah Ogan Gunning FL 26a. **Folksong Revival:** as *The Wagoner's Lad* by Joan Baez VG 41/42c, VG 2097c; The Kingston Trio FKE 2064c; The Kossoy Sisters TRD 1018a; Peggy Seeger FW 2049c, PRS 9901a; Pete

Seeger FW 2320c; as *My Horses Ain't Hungry* by Mike and Peggy Seeger RND 8001/3c. **Post Revival:** as *Wagoner's Lad* by Trapezoid FF 287c. **Country/String Band:** as *Loving Nancy* by Dock Boggs FW 3903c; as *My Horses Ain't Hungry* by Vernon Dalhart EDS 52077b; Kelly Harrell VIC 20103b. **Bluegrass:** as *My Horses Ain't Hungry* by Cullen Galyean and Bobby Harrison FW 3910c. **British:** as *Wagoner's Lad* by Bert Jansch and John Renbourn SH 99006c.

SELECTION

8

“KING KONG KITCHIE KITCHIE KI-ME-O”

Chubby Parker and His Old Time Banjo

NEW YORK: AUGUST 13, 1928.

COL 15296D

Chubby Parker, vocal and banjo.

Kentuckian Chubby Parker was a regular on the influential program “The National Barn Dance” on radio station WLS, whose call-letters refer to sponsor Sears Roebuck, the “world's largest store.” The program started in 1924 and Parker joined it a year later, playing a five-string banjo and singing. “Nickety Nackety Now Now Now” was his most popular song (Biggar 1971: p.105).

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as Froggie Went A-Courtin' by Bradley Kincaid GEN 6462b; John Jacob Niles DSC 6015b, FW 2373c; Otis High and Flarrie Griffin FW 34151c; Doc Watson VG 45/46c. **Folksong Revival**: as King Kong Kitchie Kitchie Ki-Me-O by Ed Badaux FW 3534c; Dick Lourie FW 7557c; as Froggie Went A-Courtin' by George and Gerry Armstrong FW 2335c; Richard Dyer-Bennet DYB 6000c; Bob Dylan COL 53200c;

Woody Guthrie ST 54a, SF40103C; Sam Hinton FW 7530c; Cisco Houston FW 7606c; Burl Ives COL 33183a; Spider John Koerner RDH 12c; Alan Mills FW 7642c; Jim Nollman SF 45037d, FW 6118c; Mike and Peggy Seeger RND 8001/3c; as Frog Went a Woo'in' Go by Jim Douglas FW 32319c; Alan Mills FW 7677c; Barbara Moncure FW 5311c. **Post Revival**: Bill Hinkley RDH 15c. **Country/String Band**: as Froggie Went A-Courtin' by Morgan Sexton JA 0055c. **Rock**: as Nick Cave MUTE 189.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY BURNETT AND RUTHERFORD see *Ramblin' Reckless Hobo* RND 1004a; and the collections *Collection of Mountain Fiddle Music* CTY 501a; *Collection of Mountain Songs* CTY 504a; *Collection of Mountain Blues* CTY 511a; *Old Time Ballads from the Southern Mountains* CTY 522a; and *Old Time Mountain Ballads* CTY 3505c;

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON BURNETT AND RUTHERFORD see Wolfe 1973a, 1973b, 1974.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE

SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: Clarence Ashley and Doc Watson SF 40029c; Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson SF 40005c; Doc Watson VG 6576c. **Folksong Revival**: Joan Baez, Guardian 34989c, VG 79446/7c; Erik Darling TRD 1007a; Barry Hall FW 3533c; The Kossoy Sisters TRD 1018a, SI 046c; Old Reliable String Band FW 2475c; Happy Traum KM 110a, SH 97002c. **Post Revival**: Tom Bledsoe JA 042a; Hesperus, Golden Apple 7553c. **Bluegrass**: Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin RND 0334c.

SELECTION

9

"OLD SHOES AND LEGGINS"

Uncle Eck Dunford

BRISTOL, TN: OCTOBER 31, 1928.

Uncle Eck Dunford, vocal and fiddle; Ernest Stoneman, harmonica; Hattie Stoneman, mandolin; Bolen Frost, banjo.

VIC 40060B

"Uncle" Eck Dunford, a frequent collaborator of Ernest "Pop" Stoneman (selections 64, 65), came from around Galax, VA, an area still known for its many fine old-time musicians and its famous fiddler's convention. A member of the Galax string band the Bogtrotters, Dunford was well known as a source of songs and off-beat instrumental tunings and as a local personality who dressed in an overcoat and overshoes even in the summer, adding pink earmuffs and an ornamented hat in colder weather. Although without extensive formal education he could expound on the writings of Shakespeare and Robert Burns (Nevins n.d.).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY DUNFORD see the collections, *The Bristol Sessions* CMH 011c; *Rural String Bands of Virginia* CTY 3502c; *Round the Heart of Old Galax*, Vols. 1 and 2 CTY 533/4a; *Songs of Love, Courtship and Marriage* LC LBC 2a, *Songs of Migration and Immigration* LC LBC 6a; *Virginia Traditions: Ballads from British Tradition* BRI 002a; and by the Bogtrotters, *The Bogtrotters* BIO 6003a.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DUNFORD see Lair 1971 and Nevins notes to Biograph 6003.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival**: as Old Shoes and Leggins by Mike and Peggy Seeger ARG 80a; as Old Gum Boots and Leggins by Betty Garland FW 2307c.

SELECTION

10

"WILLIE MOORE"

Burnett and Rutherford

ATLANTA, GA: NOVEMBER 3, 1927.

Richard Burnett, vocal and banjo; Leonard Rutherford, fiddle.

COL 15314D

Both from Monticello, KY, Richard Burnett (1883–1977) and Leonard Rutherford (ca. 1900–1950s) recorded frequently during the 1920s. "Dick" Burnett became a professional musician after being blinded by a robber's gunshot in 1907. Leonard Rutherford starting playing with Burnett as a teenager in 1914. Burnett's 1913 ballad "Farewell Song" became the well-known folk song "A Man of Constant Sorrow" (Malone 1985: p.46). Still making chairs at the age of 90 in Monticello (Wolfe 1973a: pp.6–10), Burnett remembered that they made their first recordings because a Virginia store owner wanted records of them to sell and talked a Columbia talent scout in Atlanta into a session for them. Burnett remembered learning "Willie Moore" from a printed ballad.

SELECTION

11

"A LAZY FARMER BOY"

Buster Carter and Preston Young

NEW YORK: JUNE 26, 1931.

COL 15702D

Preston Young, vocal and guitar; Posey Rorer, fiddle.

Buster Carter, from Mayodan, NC, and Preston Young (b. 1907) from Martinsville, VA, lived in the Piedmont area, known for string bands. Neighbor Charlie Poole and fiddler Posey Rorer played for both groups, joining Carter and Young after Poole's death. Carter and Rorer were also members of the Carolina Buddies. Preston Young spent his later years working in the sheet metal business. Although listed under Carter and Young's name, "A Lazy Farmer Boy" is performed by Young and Rorer.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY CARTER AND YOUNG see the collections *The Southern String Bands* AH 220d, *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c, and *Before the Blues*, Vol. 3 YZ 2017c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON CARTER AND YOUNG see Russell 1972.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE

SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as The Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe Corn by Vern Smelser FW 3809c. **Folksong Revival**: as A Lazy Farmer Boy by Canebreak Rattlers, Flying Crow 104a; as The Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe Corn by Spider John Koerner RDH 44c; Clark Jones FW 31091c; Peggy Seeger FW 2049c; Pete Seeger FW 7027c, FW 5003c. **Bluegrass**: as The Young Man Who Wouldn't Hoe Corn by Richard Greene RND 0075a.

SELECTION

12

"PEG AND AWL"

The Carolina Tar Heels

ATLANTA, GA: OCTOBER 14, 1928.

VIC 40007A

Clarence "Tom" Ashley, vocal and guitar; Doc Walsh, banjo; Garley Foster, vocal, harmonica, and guitar.

The Carolina Tar Heels—Doc Walsh (1901–1967), Clarence Ashley (1895–1967), and Garley Foster (1905–1968)—recorded for Victor between 1927 and 1929. Gwen Foster was in the original group but was replaced by Garley Foster (no relation to Gwen) in 1928. An unusual string band that had no fiddle, the Tar Heels entertained audiences with a mix of music and humor. One of their performance posters describes Doc Walsh as "The Banjo King of the Carolinas" and Garley Foster as "The Human Bird"; their stage show included Foster's bird imitations. Clarence Ashley (selections 3, 57) played with the group during 1928–1929. The Carolina Tar Heels stopped recording in 1932, after which Walsh worked in poultry and auto parts and Foster in carpentry. Recontacted and reunited in 1961, they recorded for Folk Legacy (FL 24) in 1964 with Walsh's son Drake. ➤➤➤

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY THE CAROLINA TAR HEELS *Look Who's Coming: The Original Carolina Tar Heels* OH 113a; a later version of the group as *The Carolina Tar Heels* FL 24a; and the collections *Collection of Mountain Songs* CTY 504a; *Collection of Mountain Blues* CTY 511a; *Ragtime #2: The Country* FW RBF18c; *Songs of Love, Courtship and Marriage* LC LBC 2a; and *Songs of Childhood* LC LBC 13a. For additional information on the group see A. Green et al.1965.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Peg and Awl by Lawrence Older FL 15a; Hobart Smith FL 17a.

**Folksong Revival:** as Peg and Awl by Bruce Hutton MMC 9040d; Pete Seeger SF 40058c. **Country/String Band:** as Peg and Awl by Clarence Ashley SF 40029c; Kelly Harrell OK 40544b; Clint Howard and Fred Price RND 0009a; Wade and Julia Manier JA 0065c. **Cajun:** as Peg and Awl by The Possum Trot String Band, Swallow 2005a. **British:** as The Long Peg and Awl by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger ARG 67a.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY GRAYSON see *The Recordings of Grayson and Whitter* CTY 513a; *Early Classics* OH 157a; and the collections *Collection of Mountain Ballads* CTY 502a; *Collection of Mountain Fiddle Music* CTY 503a; *Old Time Ballads from the Southern Mountains* CTY 522a; *A Fiddler's Convention in Mountain City, Tennessee* CTY 525a; and *Old Time Ballads* CTY 3505c; For additional information on Grayson see Wolfe 1993.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Omie Wise by Addie Graham JA 0020a; Doug and Jack Wallin SF 40013c; Doc Watson VG 45/46c, VG 155/8c, VG 79152c; The Watson Family TPC 12TS336a, VG 77001c; as Little Omie by Maggie Hammons

Parker LC AFSL65a. **Folksong Revival:** as Omie Wise by Paul Clayton FW 2310c, RVR 12615a; John McCutcheon JA 003a. **Country/String Band:** as Omie Wise by Roscoe Holcomb FW 2368c; The Iron Mountain String Band FW 2473c; Obray Ramsey PRS 13020a; as Little Omie Wise by Dock Boggs FW 3903c; as Poor Naomi Wise by Aunt Idy Harper and the Coon Creek Girls COL 47911c; as Poor Omie Wise by Clarence Ashley SF 40029c. **Bluegrass:** as Omie Wise by Bill Evans RND 0295c; The Beacon Hillbillies ESD 80882c. **British:** as Omie Wise by Pentangle REP 6463a, SH 79066c.

SELECTION

13

"OMMIE WISE"

G.B. Grayson

ATLANTA, GA: OCTOBER 18, 1927.

VIC 21625

G.B. Grayson, vocal and fiddle.

Gilliam Banmon Grayson (1888–1930) was a fiddler from Laurel Bloomery, a small East Tennessee town on the North Carolina border. Blinded by an eye injury as an infant, like many others with handicaps he chose a career as a musician. This is a solo performance, but most of Grayson's significant recordings were made with his partner, Henry Whitter (1892–1941), one of the first country musicians to play guitar and harmonica simultaneously by using a rack around his neck. This practice has come to be identified with Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan.

Grayson and Whitter's recordings for the Victor Talking Machine Company were big sellers, and some of the songs became standards, such as "The Banks of the Ohio," "Train 45," and "Handsome Molly." In 1930, they were the first group to record "Tom Dooley," the well-known North Carolina murder ballad popularized in the 1950s by the Kingston Trio. Sheriff Grayson, who arrested Tom Dooley, was G.B. Grayson's grand uncle. In 1930 G.B. Grayson was riding on the running board of a car when it crashed, causing him fatal injuries (Wolfe 1993: p.8).

ERIC VON SCHMIDT, April 1997:

"The fledgling folkies of Cambridge and Boston, indeed, all over the country, fell in love with songs. Somewhere on our various ways to 1958 we caught the Boogie-Bug which would, through successive stages, lead us ultimately to Folk Thrall. It started with a little R&B here, a little C&W there; Lard, Lard, Lard, that old Amazing Grease! Behind many a mild mannered middle-class facade The Boogie-Bug was alive and thriving. The twin symptoms were soon to appear: The Itch to Twitch; The Urge to Hanker.

It all began so innocently. A ukulele given by an aunt. That chromatic harmonica that made a funny bulge in the Christmas stocking. All those seemingly harmless kazoos. In the home setting the disease might remain dormant for long periods, but was apt to flare up after exposure to the Everly Brothers, Little Richard, Dion and the Belmonts, Fats Domino, and of course Elvis, King of the Twitching Hankerers. At this point the symptoms manifested themselves in long heartfelt concerts before imaginary microphones, often performed for the most loving audience of them all, the one right behind the bathroom mirror.

After arriving at Boston University, Harvard, Brandeis, MIT, wherever, the second and most debilitating effects are revealed. Scholastic attention

SELECTION

14

"MY NAME IS JOHN JOHANNA"

Kelly Harrell and the Virginia String Band

CAMDEN, NJ: MARCH 23, 1927.

VIC 21520A

Kelly Harrell, vocal; Posey Rorer, fiddle; Raymond D. Hundley, banjo; Alfred Steagall, guitar.

Singer Crockett Kelly Harrell (1889–1942), from Fieldale in southern Virginia, worked in the textile mills in the area. One of the finest singers from that region, Harrell sang with the Virginia Ramblers and the Virginia String Band and made records with West Virginian Henry Whitter. Both the Virginia Ramblers and the Virginia String Band included fiddler Posey Rorer, better known for his tenure in Charlie Poole's outfit. Harrell didn't play an instrument so he always needed to hire a band. At the end of the 1920s the Victor company tried to persuade him to learn an instrument for economy's sake, but Harrell refused and never recorded again. He died at age 52 from an asthma attack while working at the mill. This song is better known as "The State of Arkansas" and dates back to the minstrel show era (Russell 1971b: p.10).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF HARRELL see *Kelly Harrell and the Virginia String Band* CTY 408a and the

*Complete Kelly Harrell Vols. 1-3* BF 15508-15510a, and the collections *Virginia Traditions: Ballads from British Tradition* BRI

002a; *Virginia Traditions: Native Virginia Ballads* BRI 004a; *Collection of Mountain Ballads* CTY 502a; *Collection of Mountain Songs* CTY 504a; *Mountain Sacred Songs* CTY 508a; *Old Time Ballads from the Southern Mountains* CTY 522a; *Rural String Bands of Virginia* CTY 3502c; and *Old-Time Mountain Ballads* CTY 3505c. For additional information on Harrell see Russell 1971b.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as The

State of Arkansas by George Tucker RND 0064a. **Folksong Revival:** as The State of Arkansas by Almanac Singers, General 21b; Pete Seeger FW 2501c; Rosalie Sorrels GL 1024c; The Weavers VG 147/50c, VG 9043a. **Country/String Band:** as State of Arkansas by The New Lost City Ramblers VG 77011c; as Uncle Dave's Travels, Part 1 by Uncle Dave Macon MCA 10546c. **Bluegrass:** as The State of Arkansas by Earl Taylor and the Stony Mountain Boys RR 242a.

SELECTION "BANDIT COLE YOUNGER"

15

Edward L. Crain

NEW YORK: AUGUST 17, 1931.

COL 15710D

Edward L. Crain, The Texas Cowboy, vocal and guitar.

Texan Edward Crain (b. 1901) was a cowboy who worked on ranches and cattle drives. He played guitar, fiddle, and mandolin and performed for various radio stations in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Crain recorded this song twice in 1931, once for Columbia and once for the American Record Corporation. He was living in Oregon in 1970.

Thomas Coleman Younger (1844–1916) was from Missouri (see Harry Smith's notes). An outlaw in a gang with his brothers and the James boys, his final days were spent in a Wild West Show along with Frank James (Lomax 1938: p. 177). The ballad was probably written as a broadside in the late 1870s (N. Cohen 1981: p.119).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF CRAIN see the collections, *Palomino Country Jamboree* Palomino 315a; and *The Plains of Alberta* HIS 8007a.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the song, Younger and Crain see Cohen 1981.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS AS COLE YOUNGER INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:**

Glenn Ohrlin PH 1017a. **Folksong Revival:** Mary McCaslin PH 1024c; Roger Welsch FW 5337c. **Country/String Band:** Dock Boggs FW 2392c; Michael Martin Murphey WB 45423c; Marc Williams BR 544b.

SELECTION

16

"CHARLES GITEAU"

Kelly Harrell and the Virginia String Band

CAMDEN, NJ: MARCH 23, 1927.

VIC 20797B

Kelly Harrell, vocal; Posey Rorer, fiddle; Raymond D. Hundley, banjo; Alfred Steagall, guitar.

See selection 14. The Garfield assassination inspired a number of ballads. These broadside ballads and others like them were based on recent events and sold on printed sheets. In the 1920s their subjects included aviator Charles Lindbergh, the Scopes Trial, and various train and ship disasters.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Charles Giteau by Bascom Lamar Lunsford LC AFSL29a. **Folksong Revival:** as Charles Giteau by Crabgrass AH 4001a.

SEE IN THIS REGARD, *Ballads of American History and the Assassination of Presidents* LC AFSI29a

SELECTION

17

"JOHN HARDY WAS A DESPERATE LITTLE MAN"

The Carter Family

CAMDEN, NJ: MAY 10, 1928.

VIC 40190A

Sara Carter, vocal and autoharp; Maybelle Carter, guitar.

The Carter Family band from Maces Spring, VA, consisted of A.P. (Alvin Pleasant Delaney) Carter (1891–1960), Maybelle Carter (1909–1978), and Sara Carter (1898–1979). One of the most important country music groups in the history of American music, the Carter Family has been active for over 70 years. In early August 1927, Victor talent scout Ralph Peer advertised an audition in a Bristol, TN, newspaper. This one session was responsible for the "discovery" of the Carters and Jimmie Rodgers, "The Singing Brakeman" — the two most important identities in early country music history.

A.P. Carter collected folk songs in the Appalachian region near home and arranged them ➤➤➤➤➤

is replaced by total absorption in the records of the Kingston Trio, Josh White, The Weavers, Odetta. Soon all academic and social concerns are forgotten. A Martin flattop guitar has become the center of your universe. Its elegant neck. Its thin smooth body next to yours. Six glossy strings ever sensitive and yielding to your touch. Its fingerboard: a rosewood highway, delicately banded in such a way as to suggest a gently receding perspective. Along it, mother-of-pearl orbs glow like planets; constellations, waiting to guide you on a journey to the stars. 'Come. Come with us,' they say, and you do.

Now you are flunking out. Have mono. Bad breath, anyway. Things are getting funky. The Kingston Trio, who sounded so good such a short time ago, now sound like a noisy frat party. They have become a pain in the ass. Even the earnest Everyman strummings of the Weavers have taken on the uncomfortable sing-along aspects of Summer Camp. What is happening?—You've given away your bongo drums! You are nearing Folk Thrall.

No longer are you listening to The Limelitters on Victor, The Brothers Four on Columbia, or the Chad Mitchell Trio on Mercury. You are now hooked on Folkways records. They cost a lot for records back then, but what authority they had! No slick and shiny jackets like the rest, but all pebble-grained and thick matte paper. They even weighed more than the others. Three layers of heavy cardboard, a multipaged booklet of notes and lyrics, and the disc itself a slab of vinyl the likes of which we are not likely to see again. One of those damn platters melted down would make three transistor radio cases, two bowling balls, and a frisbee in a pear tree. ➤

in the Carter Family style. He was one of the first musicians to copyright arrangements of traditional songs in his own name, and prepared song folios for sale at their shows. Sara sang most of the lead vocals. Maybelle played guitar and autoharp.

During their career, the "Original Carter Family" recorded over three hundred songs, some of which are still frequently performed, including "Wildwood Flower," "Jimmie Brown the Newsboy," and "Keep on the Sunnyside." A mixture of sacred and secular songs, many Carter works have become bluegrass standards, and they have strongly influenced later musicians, especially Woody Guthrie, The New Lost City Ramblers, and Joan Baez. Unlike most artists on the *Anthology*, the Carter's record sales were so strong that they continued to make recordings throughout the Depression and afterwards.

In 1938 on the Texas-Mexico border the group started broadcasting via Mexican radio stations XERA, XEG, and XENT, which circumvented U.S. limitations on signal strength and so could be heard all over the South. These shows had a medicine-show format, alternating music and comedy with sales pitches for patent medicines and dubious medical procedures. The original Carter Family ceased performing as a group in the early 1940s.

Maybelle Carter learned her distinctive guitar style—picking out the melody on the bass strings—from her African-American neighbor Leslie Riddle. Influencing many folk guitarists that followed, her style is strongly identified with the folk revival. Performing as "Mother Maybelle," she and Sara made appearances at folk festivals during the 1960s, including Newport and the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife.

The Carter Family's next generation was a group made up of Maybelle along with June, Helen, Anita, and Jeanette. The younger girls had started performing with A.P., Sara, and Maybelle during their border radio period. The later Carter Family, a top-selling recording group in the 1960s and 1970s, still gets back together and tours from time to time, augmented by granddaughter Carlene. The extended Carter Family includes June's husband Johnny Cash and daughter Rosanne, both well-known recording artists in their own right.

Here was the real thing: Lead Belly, Woody Guthrie, Sonny and Brownie. And if you cared to go even further (and you did), you entered the amazing world of American Folk Music according to Harry Smith. Here you met Sleepy John Estes, Delma Lachney and Blind Uncle Gaspard, Nelstone's Hawaiians, The Carolina Tar Heels, Floyd Ming and His Pep-Steppers, Blind Lemon Jefferson, The Masked Marvel, Uncle Dave Macon and the Fruit Jar Drinkers, Mississippi John Hurt, Blind Willie Johnson, Ken Maynard (The American Boy's Favorite Cowboy), and many, many more. You are now in full Folk Thrall.

For this music sounded like it came right out of the ground. Songs like the clods of rich dark earth, fecund, timeless. Naively we thought these Old Time Singers all dead. We assumed our Heros, who had recorded these songs mostly in the late twenties and early thirties, were old even then. Actually, many were young when the records were made, as we were to realize when they started showing up—fiddles, guitars, banjos in hand—at folk festivals in the sixties. Before that we had thought only of reviving the songs, not the singers.

We were romantics. I had named a boat I had built *The John Hurt*, after Mississippi John. Geoff Muldaur was planning to find the grave of Blind Lemon Jefferson and sweep it 'neat and clean' as Jefferson had plaintively requested on a Paramount 78. Most of the smitten folkies were in their late teens, and though ten years older, I was still mourning the fact that Lead Belly had died before I could meet him."

# LOOK!

Victor Artist

A. P. CARTER

and the

Carter Family

Will give a

MUSICAL PROGRAM

AT *Roseland Theater*.....

ON *Thursday August 1*..

*The Program is Morally Good*

Admission 15 and 25 Cents

A. P. CARTER, Mace Spring, Va.



John Hardy, a ballad of African-American origin popular around the turn of the century, has become one of the most frequently performed American folksongs in both Black and White traditions.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE ORIGINAL CARTER FAMILY see the Rounder Records reissue series on CD of their Victor material. Also see the *Carter Family on Border Radio* releases on the Arhoolie and Old Homestead labels; and *Hall of Fame Series* MCA 10088c; The later group made many recordings for Columbia as did Mother Maybelle. There are simply too many to list individually. For more information on the Carters see Atkins et al. 1973, Malone 1985, J. Cohen n.d.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as John Hardy by Buell Kazee BR 144b, FW 3810c, YZ 2015c; Lead Belly SF 40045c; Frank Proffitt FW 2360c; The Russell Family CTY 734a; Hobart Smith FL 17a. **Folksong Revival:** as John Hardy by Joan Baez VG 125/7c; Saul Brody ADE 2011a; Paul Clayton FW 3571c; Frank Hamilton FW 2437c; Cisco Houston FW 2346c; Burl Ives COL 6058a; Koerner, Ray and Glover ELK 7305a; Walt Robertson FW 2330c; Mike Seeger FW 2325c; Pete Seeger FW 2451c, FW 2319c; Roger Sprung FW 31038c; The Tarriers ATL 8042a; as Johnny Hard

by Woody Guthrie SF 40101c, ST 53a. **Country/String Band:** as John Hardy by Clarence Ashley CTY 525a; Dock Boggs FW 3903c; Maybelle Carter, Smash 27041a; The Iron Mountain String Band FW 2477c; Tommy Jarrell and Fred Cockerham CTY 2702c; Walt Koken RND 0367c; Ola Belle Reed RND 0021a; Ernest Stoneman OK 7011b, CTY 533a; Fields Ward FW 3832c; Wade Ward BIO 6002a. **Bluegrass:** as John Hardy Was a Desperate Little Man by Flatt and Scruggs and Doc Watson COL 9443a; as John Hardy by Tom Adams RND 0282c; Norman Blake TAK 7052a; David Johnson FW 31094c; The Kentucky Colonels RND 0199c; The Lilly Brothers FW 2433c; Bill Monroe DEC 4266a; Alan Munde RND 0311c; Tony Rice REB 1582a, RND 0183c; Earl Scruggs COL 32268a; The Virginia Mountain Boys FW 3833c. **Rock:** as John Hardy by Blackhands, Sub Pop 162c; Lonnie Donegan ATL 8038a; Manfred Mann EMI 559c; George Thorogood RND 3013c; Uncle Tupelo, Rockville 6050c. **British:** as John Hardy by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger FW 8731c.

SELECTION **“GONNA DIE WITH MY HAMMER IN MY HAND”**

18

The Williamson Brothers and Curry

ST. LOUIS, MO: APRIL 26, 1927.

OK 45127

Arnold Williamson, vocal and fiddle; Irving Williamson, vocal and guitar; Curry, vocal and guitar.

The Williamsons and Curry were from Logan County, WV, a coal mining region of the state. They apparently accompanied their neighbor Frank Hutchison (selection 9) to this St. Louis recording session. The Williamsons were brothers, but nothing is known about Curry. Arnold Williamson was 23 years old at the time of the session. They continued to play locally in Logan County for many years thereafter. John Henry in all its variants is arguably the most famous American folksong.

THIS IS A SELECTED LIST OF JOHN HENRY AND RELATED BALLADS FROM THE JOHN HENRY LEGEND (There are many more) **Traditional American Folk:** as John Henry by Rich Amerson FW 4471c; Etta Baker TRD 1007a; Bill Cornett SF 40077c; Bill and Jean Davis SF 40097c; Willie Dodson FW 4474c; Buell Kazee FW 3810c; Lead Belly SF 40068c, SF 40045c, FW 7533c; J.J. Neece SF 40097c; John Jacob Niles TRD 1023a; FW 2373c; Leslie Riddle SF 40097c; Kilby Snow FW 2365c; Henry Grady Terrell FW 34162c; Doc Watson and Clarence Ashley SF 40029c; Doc Watson VG 155/8c; as Little John Henry by James “Iron Head” Baker LC AFSL53a. **Folksong Revival:** as John Hardy by Harry Belafonte RCA 2469a; Bruce Buckley FW 2025c; Paul Clayton FW 3571c; Richard Dyer-Bennet DYB 5000c; Sam Eskin CK 1020c; John Fahey TAK 1002a; The Folksmiths FW 2407c; Ronnie Gilbert and Odetta FF 483c; Woody Guthrie SF 40007c; Frank Hamilton FW 2437c; Cisco Houston VF

9002a; Burl Ives DEC 8125a; John Lomax Jr. FW 3508c; Bill McAdoo and Pete Seeger FW 2448 c; The New Christy Minstrels COL 8987a; Paul Robeson COL 4105a; Carl Sandburg COL 5339a; Mike and Peggy Seeger RND 8001/3a; Pete Seeger FF 104c, FW 2319c, FW 2513c, SF 40027c, SF 45024d; Dave Van Ronk FW 3818c; as The Death of John Henry by Rambling Jack Elliott AFJ 210a. **Post Revival:** as John Henry by The Heartbeats MMC 9040d; Kristina Olsen PH 1147c. **Country/String Band:** as John Henry by The Blue Sky Boys RCA 5520a; Dock Boggs FW 2392c; The Bogtrotters BIO 6003a; Tommy Jarrell MTN 310a; Wade Mainer OH 124a; The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2395c; George Pegram RND 0001c, FW 2435c; Morgan Sexton JA 0055c; Ernest Stoneman EDS 51869b; The Sutphin Family FW 2315c; Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers RND 1005c; Merle Travis CAP 891a; Martin Young and Corbin Grigsby FW 2317c; as John Henry Blues by Evans and McClain YZ 2017c; as the Death of John Henry by Uncle

Dave Macon BR-112b, BR 59001a, CRL 174a, CTY 502a, CTY 545d, DU 101a, RND 1028c, CTY 3504c, VOC 15320b; as K.C. Blues by Frank Hutchison RND 1007a; as The Legend of John Henry's Hammer by Johnny Cash COL 29a, COL 1930a. **Bluegrass:** as John Henry by Hyla Brown JES 134a; Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard SF 40065c; Flatt and Scruggs COL 8364a; Tony Furtado RND 0277c; Hot Rize SGH 3748c; David Johnson FW 31094c; Johnson Mountain Boys RND 0135c, RND 0260c; The Kentucky Colonels RND SS31c; Jimmy Martin DEC 4643a; The Stanley Brothers CC 0101c, JLY 118 a; The Virginia Mountain Boys FW 3839c; as New John Henry Blues by Bill Monroe VOC 3702a.

**Blues:** as John Henry by Big Bill Broonzy SF 40023c; Cephas and Wiggins FF 394c; John Jackson AH 378c; Furry Lewis FW 3823c, L7 9202c; Mississippi Fred McDowell RND 2138c; Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry SF 40011c; Memphis Slim FW 2385c, FW 3535c; Virgil Perkins FW 2610c; Henry Thomas YZ 1081c, OJL 3a, HER 209a; Josh White EMR 36052a, ELK 123a, ELK 75008a; as Spike Driver Blues by Mississippi John Hurt (see selection 80) VG 79220c, RND 1081c, YZ 1065c; as the Story of John Henry by Josh White ELK 701a. **Rock:** as John Henry by Dick Dale, Accent 5033a; Lonnie Donegan LON 1650 45; Duane Eddy, Jamie 3011a. **British:** as John Henry by John Renbourn REP 6482a.

SELECTION

19

“STACKALEE”

Frank Hutchison

NEW YORK: JANUARY 28, 1927.

OK 45106

Frank Hutchison, vocal, guitar, and harmonica.

Frank Hutchison (1897–1945), an Anglo-American coal miner from Logan, WV, played ballads and blues holding the guitar on his lap and changing pitch by sliding a knife up and down the strings. His impressive talent was partially shaped by the music of a handicapped Black musician named Bill Hunt, who lived nearby (M. Seeger 1973). Like neighbor Henry Whitter, he used a harmonica rack while playing. Billed as “The Pride of West Virginia,” Hutchison also played with neighbor Dick Justice (see selection 1). When his recording career ended in 1929, he briefly ran a grocery store in Lake, WV, but not much else is known about him; he is believed to have died in Ohio (Seeger 1973: p.7). His song “The Train That Carried My Girl from Town” became a staple in guitarist Doc Watson’s repertoire, and his “Coney Isle” was popularized by the New Lost City Ramblers.

Stagger Lee has also been performed as jazz and as rhythm and blues. Singer Lloyd Price had a hit with it in 1959. The legendary figure is said by some to have been so evil that the devil won’t let him in Hell (Leach 1955: p.765). Based on an actual murder in St. Louis in 1895, the song and its story are thoroughly discussed in Marcus 1996 and Brown 1996.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS BY HUTCHISON see *The Train That Carried My Girl from Town* RND 1007a; and the collections, *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c; *Collection of Mountain Blues* CTY 511a; *Old Time Mountain Guitar* CTY 523a; *Old Time Music from West Virginia* DOC 8004a; *West Virginia Hills* OH 141a and *White Country Blues, 1926–1938* COL 47466c. For additional information on Hutchison see Russell 1971a, Seeger 1973.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Stack O’Lee by Doc and Merle Watson VG 6576c; as Stagolee Was a Bully by Uncle John Patterson FW 34162c. **Folksong Revival:** as Mrs. DeLion’s Lament by David Bromberg FTY 9540a; Jim Ringer PH 1021a; as Stackalee by Bob Dylan COL 57590c; Woody Guthrie SF 40101c, FW 2481c; Tim Hardin Atco 33210a; The Journeymen CAP 1951a; Pete Seeger FW 2321c; as Stagolee by Cisco Houston FW 2042c; as Stagger Lee by Tom Rush FTY 24709a. **Country/String**

**Band:** as Stackalee by The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2399c; as Stackolee by Ed Haley RND 1010a. **Bluegrass:** as Stagger Lee by Tim and Molly O’Brien SGH 3804c. **Blues/ Rhythm and Blues:** as Billy Lyons and Stackalee by Furry Lewis YZ 2008c; as Stackalee by Dr. John ALL 3901c; The Fabulous Thunderbirds COL 39983a; as Stagger Lee by James Brown KNG 1020a; Cephas and Wiggins FF 394c; Wilson Pickett, RH 72218c; Lloyd Price MCA 11184c, MCA 35994c; Professor Longhair RH 7144c; Taj Mahal COL 18c; as Stack O’Lee Blues by Mississippi John Hurt YZ 1065c; as Stack O’Lee by Roy Bookbinder BG 2023a; as Stagolee by Jesse Fuller, Good Time Jazz 12031a. **Hawaiian** as Stack O’Lee Blues by Sol Ho’o’pi’i RND 1024c. **Rock:** as Stagger Lee by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds REP 46195c; The Grateful Dead, Arista 8321c; Bill Haley and the Comets, Laserlight 12750c; Huey Lewis and the News ELK 61500c; Johnny Rivers, Imperial 9284a, UA 93a; Doug Sahm, Topline 172 a; The Youngbloods WB 2566a.

SELECTION

20

COL 15099D

“WHITE HOUSE BLUES”

Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers

NEW YORK: SEPTEMBER 20, 1926.

Charlie Poole, vocal and banjo; Posey Rorer, fiddle; Roy Harvey, guitar.

Charlie Poole (1892–1931) and the North Carolina Ramblers were one of the most popular string bands of the 1920s. Poole was from the North Carolina Piedmont and worked in textile mills. His banjo playing is a sharp three-finger style and he based his singing on that of Al Jolson, whom he greatly admired (Malone 1985: p.51). Poole died at age 39, it is said, from a combination of hard living and alcohol.

Fiddler Posey Rorer played with a number of string bands in the area (see selections 11, 14, 16). Guitarist Roy Harvey (1892–1958) was a railroad engineer from Beckley, WV, and a songwriter, frequently of railroad ballads, including “The Wreck of the C&O.”

Virginian Ernest Stoneman and Georgian Riley Puckett recorded very different versions of the this Presidential assassination ballad during the 1920s, but this version of “White House Blues” has become a bluegrass standard.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF POOLE AND THE NORTH CAROLINA RAMBLERS see *Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers, Vols. 1 and 2* CTY 3501c and 3508c; *Charlie Poole 1927–1929* HIS 8005a; *The Legend of Charlie Poole* CTY 516a; and *Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers, Vol. 4* CTY 540a; and the collections *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c; *White Country Blues, 1926–1938* COL 47466c; *Collection of Mountain Fiddle Music* CTY 501a; *Collection of Mountain Ballads* CTY 502a; and *Collection of Mountain Songs* CTY 504a. Also the Library of Congress recording, *Songs and Ballads of American History and the Assassination of Presidents* LC AFSL29a could be of interest. For additional information on Poole see Rorrer 1981, 1982, and Rosenberg 1968. A study of the relationship between White House Blues, Cannon Ball Blues, and McKinley can be found by Rosenberg 1968. For additional information on Roy Harvey see A, Green et al. 1968.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as White House Blues by Doc Watson VG 45/46c; The Watson Family VG

77001c; as Zolgotz by Bascom Lamar Lunsford LC AAFSL29a.

**Folksong Revival**: as McKinley by The Greenbriar Boys VG 79159a; and as the related song Cannon Ball Blues by Utah Phillips PH 1004c. **Country/String Band**: as White House Blues by Roy Harper OH 80094a; The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2494c, FW 5264c; as the Unlucky Road to Washington by Ernest Stoneman CTY 3510c; and the related song Cannonball Blues by The Carter Family TL 006a; Maybelle Carter VG 77016c; Wayne Henderson FF 70542c. **Bluegrass**: as White House Blues by Del McCoury REB 1610d; Bill Monroe SF 40063c, SF 40080c, MCA 10048c; Charlie Monroe CTY 538a; Don Reno and Bill Harrell RR 171a; The Stanley Brothers CC 0101c, REB 855d; Earl Taylor SF 40038c; The Virginia Mountain Boys FW 3833c; as McKinley's Blues by Norman Blake and Friends FF 701c; as McKinley's Gone by Flatt and Scruggs COL 1830a; and as the related song Cannonball Blues by Jerry Douglas and Peter Rowan SGH 3847c. **Rock**: as Hard Times by Bolied in Lead OMN 2006c. **British**: as White House Blues by John Renbourn REP 2082a.

SELECTION

21

OK 8560

“FRANKIE”

Mississippi John Hurt

MEMPHIS, TN: FEBRUARY 14, 1928.

Mississippi John Hurt, vocal and guitar.

John Hurt (1894–1966), from Avalon, MS, in the heart of the Delta, recorded twelve songs for Okeh records in 1928, but for most of his life he worked as a tenant farmer and played only for local gatherings.

In 1963 music enthusiast Tom Hoskins went looking for him on the basis of his song “Avalon My Home Town.” He was still living there, and so “Mississippi” John Hurt soon found himself with a second career making recordings and playing numerous venues including Friends of Old Time Music concerts and the Newport Folk Festival. Hurt was greatly loved by both audiences and performers. Folk singer Tom Paxton wrote the song “Did You Hear John Hurt” to honor him, and the chorus of his song “Coffee Blues”—“just a lovin’ spoonful”—became the name of a popular 1960s rock group. His understated style of guitar playing influenced many who heard him in both blues and folk music worlds.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF HURT see for his early career *The 1928 Sessions* YZ 1065c; *Mississippi John Hurt* 1928 BIO C4a; *Avalon Blues: The Complete Okeh Recordings* COL 64986c; and for the later career, *The Best of Mississippi John Hurt* VG 19/20c, VG 73103c; *The Immortal John Hurt* VG 79248c; *Last Sessions* VG 79327c; *Today* VG 79220c; *Folk Songs and Blues* PDM 13157a; *Worried Blues* PDM 13161a, RND 1082c; *Memorial Anthology Vols. 1 and 2* Genes 9906/7c which includes a long spoken interview with Hurt by Pete Seeger; and the collections *Legends of the Blues, Vol. 1* COL 46215c; *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c; *Rural Blues* FW RF202c; *Blues Rediscoveries* FW RF11c; *Friends of Old Time Music* FW 2390c; *Folk Song America* SI 046c; *Blues at Newport* VG 115/6c; *The Great Bluesmen* VG 25/26a; *Great Bluesmen/Newport* VG 77/78c; *Blues at Newport* VG 115/6c; *Newport Folk Festival: The Evening Concerts* 1963 VG 77002c; *Blues with a Feeling* VG 77005c; *Mississippi Moaners* YZ 1009c; *Before the Blues, Vol. 1* YZ 2015c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 3* YZ 2017c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as Frankie and Johnny by Brownie Ford FF 559c; Doc and Merle Watson SGH 2205c; as Frankie and Albert by Lead Belly ELK 301a,

ST 51a; as Frankie Was a Good Girl by Louise Foreacre FW 2315c. **Folksong Revival**: as Frankie by Paul Clayton FW 2110c; Mike Seeger FW 2325c; Cisco Houston DSC 103a; Pete Seeger FW 2320c; as Frankie and Albert by Rolf Cahn and Eric Von Schmidt FW 2417c; Bob Dylan COL 53200c. **Country/String Band**: as Frankie by Dyke's Magic City Trio OH 191a; as Frankie and Johnny by The Carter Family OH 112a; Merle Haggard CAP 223a; Roscoe Holcomb FW 2374c; Jimmie Rodgers RCA 6091a; as Frankie Dean by Darby and Tarlton COL 9660a, OT 102a; as Frankie's Man, Johnny by Johnny Cash COL 29a, HMY 11342a; as Leaving Home by The New Lost City Ramblers SF 40036c, FW 2397c; Charlie Poole COL 47466c. **Bluegrass**: as Frankie and Johnny by The Country Gentlemen REB 1699c. **Blues/Rhythm and Blues**: as Frankie in a later version by John Hurt VG 9145a, Genes 9906c; as Frankie and Johnny by Brook Benton, Pair 1269a; Big Bill Broonzy FW 31005c; Tiny Grimes PRS 1796a; Corey Harris ALL 4850c; Taj Mahal COL 52465c; as Frankie and Albert by Rory Block RND 3073c; Sam Cooke, Abkco 2970a; Charlie Patton OJL 1a, YZ 2010c. **Jazz**: as Frankie and Johnny by Louis Armstrong ADF 1930a; Spike Jones LIB 3338a; The Society Syncopatens FW RFB 203c; Fats Waller RVR 12-109a.

SELECTION

22

PAR 12505B

“WHEN THAT GREAT SHIP WENT DOWN”

William and Versey Smith

CHICAGO: AUGUST 1927.

William Smith, vocal and guitar; Versey Smith, vocal and tambourine.

The Smiths recorded four songs in 1927 during their visit to Chicago, but not much more is known about them. Husband and wife, they were reputed to be street singers, perhaps from Texas. But most say the Carolinas, based on the printed ballad in the Frank C. Brown Collection at Duke University with similar lyrics written by a W.O. Smith, who drove a horse cab in Durham from 1912–1915 (Oliver 1984: pp.225-226).

The Titanic disaster inspired many ballads. African-American musicians, in particular, found it noteworthy and ironic that company policies had kept Blacks from the doomed ship; the sinking was also attributed by some to divine retribution. Roy Acuff and Woody Guthrie recorded Titanic ballads as did Ernest Stoneman (selection 64, 65), Frank Hutchison (selection 19) as “The Last Scene of the

"Titanic" and Blind Willie Johnson (selection 52) as "God Moves on the Water."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE SMITHS see the collections, *The Songster Tradition* DOC 5045c; *Songs of War and History* LC LBC 10a; *In the Spirit, Vol. 2* OJL 13a; and *Gospel Singers and Choirs* Topaz Jazz 1011c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS AND RELATED SONGS ABOUT THE TITANIC DISASTER INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as The Great Titanic by Hobart Smith FL 17a; as a Georgia Sea Island song about the Titanic see Save the Titanic by Bessie Jones and the Georgia Sea Island Singers NW 278a. **Folksong Revival**: as When That Great Ship Went Down by Woody Guthrie and Cisco

Houston SF 40100c; as The Titanic by Ed Badeaux FW 7510c; Rolf Cahn FW 2416c; The Homesteaders RVR 7537a; Spider John Koerner RDH 44c; as The Titanic Disaster by Pete Seeger FW 2319c. **Country/String Band**: as The Great Titanic by Roy Acuff CAP 617a, ELK 303a; The Phipps Family FW 2375c. **Blues**: as The Titanic by Pink Anderson FW 3588c; as a related Titanic ballad, God Moves on the Water by Blind Willie Johnson YZ 1058c, FW RBF 19c, COL 52835c. **Gospel**: as When That Great Ship Went Down by The Dixieaires HRT 319a. **Rock**: as The Titanic by The Blood Oranges ESD 80792c.

SELECTION

23

"ENGINE 143"

The Carter Family

CAMDEN, NJ: FEBRUARY 15, 1929.

VIC 40088B

Sara Carter, vocal and autoharp; Maybelle Carter, guitar.

See selection 17.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as Engine 143 by Hamper McBee RND 0061a; as The F.F.V. by Doc Watson VG 155/8c; as George Allen by Austin Harmon LC AFS L61a. **Folksong Revival**: as Engine 143 by Joan Baez VG 2097c; The Kossoy Sisters TRD 1018a; as The F.F.V. by Townes Van Zandt, Tomato 7013a. **Country/String Band**: as Engine 143, a later

Carter rendition with a young June Carter on vocal AH 411c; as George Allen's Engine 143 by A.P. Carter, Pine Mountain 206a; as the Wreck of the C&O (George Alley) by Ernest Stoneman EDS 51823b, OK7011b. **Bluegrass**: as George Alley's F.F.V. by Flatt and Scruggs COL 1830a, COL 8630a.

SELECTION

24

"KASSIE JONES, PARTS 1 AND 2"

Furry Lewis

MEMPHIS, TN: AUGUST 28, 1928.

VIC 21664A&B

Furry Lewis, vocal and guitar.

Memphis bluesman Walter "Furry" Lewis (1893–1981) played impressive bottleneck guitar, which echoed his vocal phrasings in expressive sets of sliding notes. Having lost a leg in a railroad accident in 1917, he chose music as a vocation in which he could earn a living. He played in medicine shows and on the streets and recorded 23 songs in the 1920s. He often associated with Jim Jackson (selection 36), and played in a jug band with Jackson, Will Shade (selections 66, 81) and Gus Cannon (selections 59, 72). After the 1920s, Furry worked for the city of Memphis until he retired.

Late in his life, Furry Lewis had a unique second career, appearing in the Burt Reynolds movie *W.W. and the Dixie Dance Kings* and touring during the 1970s as the opening act for rock musician Leon Russell. He also traveled with a rock ensemble called the Alabama State Troupers, who packaged different styles of music together with rock. Singer and songwriter Joni Mitchell's song "Furry

Sings the Blues" was written after her visit to Lewis' rooming house in Memphis during the 1970s.

"Kassie Jones" was originally released in two sections. Before the invention of magnetic tape in the late 1940s, master recordings were made on aluminum, shellac, or lacquer discs, each one of which could hold about four minutes of sound, so many longer songs had to be broken into two.

Many songs treat the Casey Jones legend. The best-known arrangement was written by vaudevillians Eddie Newton and Lawrence Seibert in 1909. Lewis's version has a melody similar to that of the African-American railroad song "Charley Snyder" and the hobo song "Jay Gould's Daughter" (Raim et al. 1973: p.64).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF LEWIS for his early career see *In His Prime* YZ 1050c; for his later career see *Furry Lewis* FW 3823c; *The Alabama State Troupers* ELK 75022a; *Fourth and Beale* L7 9202c; *Shake 'Em On Down* FTY 24703a; and the collections *Mississippi Delta Blues, Vol. 1* AH 1041a; *Shake 'Em on Down* AH 527c; *When I Lay My Burden Down* BIO 130c; *Blues—Music from the Film* FW AS101c; *Blues Rediscoveries* FW RF11c; *The Rural Blues* FW RF202c; *Blues Masters, Vol. 10* RH 71135c; *Blues Masters, Vol. 12* RH 71129c; *The Blues* SI 101c; *It Came from Memphis* Upstart 022c; *Ten Years in Memphis* YZ 1002c; *Frank Stokes' Dream* YZ 1008c; *Memphis Jamboree* YZ 1021c; *Memphis Masters* YZ 2008c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 3* YZ 2017c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON LEWIS see Charters 1959: pp.101-106.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE

CASEY JONES STORY see N. Cohen 1981.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG AND VARIANTS INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as Casey Jones by Isaac Curry BRI 001a. **Folksong Revival**: as Kassie Jones by John Fahey Varrick 019a; as Casey Jones by Spider John Koerner RDH 84c. **Country/String Band**: as Casey Jones by Vernon Dalhart VIC 20502b, Mark 56 794a; Riley Puckett COL 113a; as Freight Train Boogie by The Maddox Brothers and Rose AH 437c; The Whitstein Brothers RND 0229c. **Bluegrass**: Casey Jones by Charlie Monroe CTY 538a; as Freight Train Boogie by Bill Harrell REB 1655d, REB 1113c. **Blues**: as Furry's version of Casey Jones by K.C. Douglas CK 5002c; as Talking Casey by Mississippi John Hurt VG 19/20c.

SELECTION

25

"DOWN ON PENNY'S FARM"

The Bently Boys

JOHNSON CITY, TN: OCTOBER 23, 1929.

COL 15565

The identities of the banjo and guitar players are unknown.

The Bently Boys were possibly from North Carolina, but the producer of their recording session, Frank Walker, did not remember much about them (M. Seeger 1973: p.17). The memory of their song, "Penny's Farm," however, has remained vital. Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers recorded it as "Tanner's Farm," and Bob Dylan adapted it as "Maggie's Farm." The song is about being a sharecropper.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS AND RELATED SONGS INCLUDE **Folksong Revival**: as Penny's Farm by Fleming Brown MRW 1953a; Pete Constantini and Rob Rosenthal FW 5287c; Pete Seeger SF 40018c; Happy and Artie Traum RND 3007a; and as a related song, Maggie's Farm by Bob Dylan COL 2328c, COL 31120c, COL 34349c. **Post Revival**: as Penny's Farm by Bob Bovee and Gail Heil MMC 9045d; as Tanner's Farm by Mike Cross SGH 1001c. **Country/String Band**: as Penny's Farm by The West Orrtanna String Band, RVH 924a; as On Tanner's Farm by Gid Tanner and Riley Puckett BB 5565b.

SELECTION

26

PAR 12805B

"MISSISSIPPI BOWEAVIL (BOLL WEEVIL) BLUES"

The Masked Marvel

RICHMOND, IN: JUNE 14, 1929.

Charley Patton, vocal and guitar.

"The Masked Marvel" was a pseudonym for Charley Patton (1891–1934), who was born near Edwards, MS, and spent most of his first thirty years on Dockery Plantation near Cleveland, MS. Because of Dockery's size—as many as 2000 people lived there as tenant farmers—it was an important stop for traveling blues musicians. Patton also traveled the Delta, and his music influenced many bluesmen in the area including Son House, Robert Johnson, and Willie Brown. Patton was primarily known as a guitarist but he also played banjo (see YZ 2016). Patton died of heart disease when he was only 42, but his unfortunately short recording career was quite important, and his work has been extensively anthologized in the years since. In one sales campaign for his records, any consumer correctly identifying the mystery artist on "Mississippi Boweavil Blues" was to be awarded a free record (Tottenham 1994).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF PATTON

see *The Founder of the Delta Blues* YZ 1020c; *King of the Delta Blues* YZ 2001c; *Charlie Patton, 1929–1934* OJL 1a; *Charlie Patton, Vol. 2, 1929–1934* OJL 7a; *The Voice of the Delta Black Swan* 22c; and the collections *Roots 'n Blues* CDL 47911c; *Legends of the Blues* COL 46215c; *The Slide Guitar* COL 46218c; *Blues Masters, Vol. 8* RH 71130c; *The Music Never Stopped* SH 6014c; *Mississippi Blues, 1927–1936* YZ 1001a; *Mississippi Moaners, 1929–1942* YZ 1009c; *Roots of Rock* YZ 1063c; *Roots of Robert Johnson* YZ 1073c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 2* YZ 2016c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PATTON see Fahey 1970 and Calt and Wardlow n.d.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as Boll Weevil by Vera Hall LC LBC 14a; Lead Belly SF 40068c, FW 7533c; and the Library of Congress has seven ballads on the boll weevil on *The Ballad Hunters, Vol. 5/6* LC AFSL51a.

**Folksong Revival**: as Boll Weevil by Bill Bonyun FW 7542c; Guy Carawan FW 3544c; Erik Darling ELK 154a; Ramblin' Jack Elliott PRS 13065a; Fred Gerlach FW 3529c; Woody Guthrie SF 40007c, RND 1041c; Sam Hinton FW 7548c; Cisco Houston FW 2346c; Burl Ives MCA 98a; Spider John Koerner RDH 44c; Hermes Nye FW 2128c; Carl Sandburg, Lyricord 66a; Pete Seeger FW 2323c, FW 2513c; The Weavers VG 73116c; Josh White MCA 4170a. **Post Revival**: as Boll Weevil by Mike Cross SGH 1011c; Dave Moore RDH 06c. **Country/String Band**: as Boll Weevil by Fred Cockerham, Tommy Jarrell, and Oscar Jenkins CTY 741a.

**Bluegrass**: as Boll Weevil by Benny Martin GS 1415a; The Nashville Bluegrass Band SGH 3843c. **Blues**: as Boll Weevil by Little Walter DMK 648a; Blind Willie McTell BIO 144c. **Rhythm and Blues**: as The Boll Weevil Song by Brook Benton KNG 1340a, Curb 77741c. **Rock**: as Boll Weevil by Eddie Cochran LIB 3320a; Sid Sevidge, Upstart 022c.

SELECTION

27

VIC 23611A

"GOT THE FARM LAND BLUES"

The Carolina Tar Heels

MEMPHIS, TN: NOVEMBER 19, 1930.

Garley Foster, vocal, harmonica, and guitar; Doc Walsh, banjo.

See selection 12.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Country/String Band**: as Got the Farm Land Blues by The New Lost City Ramblers FW 31027c.

SELECTION

28

COL 15071D

"SAIL AWAY LADY"

"Uncle Bunt" Stephens

NEW YORK: MARCH 29, 1926.

"Uncle Bunt" Stephens, fiddle.

John L. Stephens (1879–1951) was born in Bedford, TN, orphaned at an early age, and raised in the town of Flatcreek. While working on a construction site in 1926, he decided to enter a fiddle contest sponsored by automaker Henry Ford, who was a fan of old-time string band music and wanted to promote its popularity. Stephens won at every level of competition, reaching the finals in Detroit as the South's representative. He most impressed the judges with "Cacklin' Hen" and "Sail Away Lady." He won first prize and was awarded \$1000, a new Lincoln automobile, and a set of new clothes. Stephens requested cash instead of the Lincoln. Five feet tall and less than 120 pounds, Uncle Bunt later appeared as a guest at the Grand Ole Opry, billed as "World Champion Fiddler."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF STEPHENS

see the collection, *Nashville: The Early String Bands, Vol. 1* CTY 541a and *The Wonderful World of Old Time Fiddles* VET 104a.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON STEPHENS see Roberson 1970 and Burman 1968.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival**: as Sail Away Ladies by Guy Carawan FW 3548c; The Kingston Trio CAP 28498c, FKE 2036c; Odetta VG 9137a; The Rooftop Singers VG 9134a; Tracy Schwarz FW 8350 c; The Wagoners FW 7030c. **Post Revival**: as

Sail Away Ladies by Brian Keane SH 6013c. **Country/String Band**: as Sail Away Ladies by Kyle Creed MTN 304a; Highwoods String Band RND 0074a; The Iron Mountain String Band FW 2473c; Uncle Dave Macon BR 80094b, BR 59000a, CRL 174a, CTY 3504c, CTY 521a, VOC 5155b; The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2395c, VG 77011c; The Plank Road String Band KM 213a. **Bluegrass**: as Sail Away Ladies by Jimmy Arnold REB 1621c; Kenny Baker CTY 730a; John Hartford FF 259d; Alan Munde RND 0301c.

SELECTION

29

VIC 21353A

"THE WILD WAGONER"

Jilson Setters

NEW YORK: FEBRUARY, 27, 1928.

Jilson Setters (J.W. Day), vocal and fiddle; unknown, guitar.

The story of Jilson Setters of Lost Hope Hollow, KY, is an intriguing one. Folk festival organizer and entrepreneur Jean "The Traipsin' Woman" Thomas, who ran the American Folk Song Festival (near Ashland, KY, from 1931–1960s) presented Setters to the public as an old fiddler who had lived in isolation in the mountains for many years, still possessing archaic traits of his English heritage and a repertoire of ancient British ballads. It was also said that through a medical operation Setters had recently regained his eyesight and was experiencing a great shock at discovering the urban world. He was taken to New York to be presented at society functions and to England to be presented to the King and Queen. Books were written about him and his authenticity was attested to by a number of folklore scholars.

But Setters' real name was James William Day (1861–1942), and he was from Catlettsburg, KY, across the Big Sandy River from Huntington, WV. His eye surgery had really occurred over 20 years

earlier. During the 1930s and early 1940s, Day performed at folk festivals as Jilson Setters (a name created by combining the names of his father and mother) (Green 1996).

J.W. Day also recorded for the Library of Congress as Jilson Setters. For additional recordings of Day/Setters see the collections, *Kentucky Country* RND 1037a; and *Wonderful World of Old Time Fiddlers* VET 104a.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Country/String Band**: as The Georgia Waggoner by Bert Layne HRT 048a; Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers OH 192a, VET 107a; as Georgia Wagner by Fiddlin' John Carson and His Virginia Reelers OK 45040b; Gid Tanner and His Skillet Lickers

BB 5433b; as Wagoner, by Snuffy Jenkins and Pappy Sherill RND 0005a; Uncle Am Stuart VOC 14840b; as The Texas Waggoner by Eck Robertson VIC 40145b.

SELECTION "WAKE UP JACOB"

30

Prince Albert Hunt's Texas Ramblers

DALLAS, TX: JUNE 26, 1929.

OK 45375

Prince Albert Hunt, fiddle; Harmon Clem, guitar; unknown, second guitar.

Archie "Prince" Albert Hunt (d. 1931) was from Terrell, TX, just south of Dallas. His group, the Texas Ramblers, played a style of music that later evolved into Western Swing, featuring an interplay between guitar and fiddle. Hunt also played with his neighbors Oscar and Doc Harper. A television documentary was made about Hunt in the 1970s by Houston Public Television (Malone 1985: p.159). He met his death outside a Dallas bar, shot by a jealous husband.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival**: as Wild Horse by Howard Bursen FL 74a. **Country/String Band**: as Wild Horse by Frank Hutchison OK 45093b; Charlie Poole and the North Carolina Ramblers CTY 3508c, CTY 509a; as Wild Horse of Stoney Point by

Jilson Setters (J.W. Day) RND 1037a. **Bluegrass**: as Wild Horse by Curly Ray Cline REB 1545a; as Wild Horse of Stoney Point by Bill Monroe, Hay Holler 106a.

SELECTION "LA DANSEUSE"

31

Delma Lachney and Blind Uncle Gaspard

CHICAGO: JANUARY 26, 1929.

VOC 5303

Delma Lachney, fiddle; Blind Uncle Gaspard, guitar.

Delma Lachney (1896–1947), a left-handed fiddler from the area near Marksville, LA, was from a large family with ties to Quebec. Alcide "Blind Uncle" Gaspard (1880–1937), from Avoyelles Parish, usually played American country music in a string band with his brothers, Victor and Amade. Lachney and Gaspard had not played together often before the Chicago recording session and may not even have known each other well. They also played at a recording session for Vocalion in New Orleans in March of 1929. (Ann Savoy, personal communication). The song title translates as "The Dancer."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF LACHNEY AND GASPARD see the collection *Louisiana Cajun Music*,

Vol. 5: *The Early Years 1928–1938* OT 114a.

SELECTION

32

"GEORGIA STOMP"

Andrew and Jim Baxter

ATLANTA, GA: OCTOBER 16, 1928.

VIC 38002B

Andrew Baxter, fiddle; Jim Baxter, vocal and guitar.

The Baxter home in Calhoun, GA, was a regional center for string band music. Father Andrew and son Jim could play a number of musical styles and did so with many other local musicians. In August 1927, the African-American Baxters accompanied a White Georgia string band named the Georgia Yellow Hammers to Charlotte for a recording session. Although they had to ride in separate cars, they played together for some recordings, most notably, "G Rag." The Baxters also recorded by themselves at the session. A racially integrated string band from Georgia must have been an unusual sight in the studio in the 1920s. There were more sessions with and without the Georgia Yellow Hammers in 1928 and 1929. Both Baxters died in the 1950s.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE BAXTERS see the collections, *String Bands, 1926–1929* DOC 5167c; *Before the Blues, Vol. 1* YZ 2015c; *Songs of Migration and Immigration* LC LBC 6a; and on various recordings by the *Georgia Yellowhammers* RND 1032a.

SELECTION

33

"BRILLIANCY MEDLEY"

Eck Robertson and Family

DALLAS, TX: OCTOBER 11, 1929.

VIC 40298A

Alexander "Eck" Robertson, fiddle; Nettie Robertson, guitar; Daphne Robertson, guitar; Dueron Robertson, banjo.

Alexander "Eck" Robertson (1887–1975) was born in Delaney, AR. His 1922 recording of the fiddle tune "Sally Goodin" is considered the first commercial recording of traditional American country music. In 1923, he played the song on radio and became the first country artist to advertise his recording in the new medium (Malone 1985: p.35). Robertson toured with traveling medicine shows from 1903 to 1906 and also worked as a pianist for silent movie houses. He spent most of his life living in Amarillo, TX, participating in many fiddle contests from the 1930s to the 1960s, and making his living as a piano tuner. At one contest in the early 1960s he met and was interviewed by members of the New Lost City Ramblers, scholar-performers who knew of Robertson through the *Anthology*. Eck subsequently appeared at a number of folk festivals including the 1964 UCLA Folk Festival and the 1965 Newport Festival. His gravestone bears the inscription "World's Champion Fiddler."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF ROBERTSON see *Eck Robertson, Master Fiddler, His Complete Recordings, 1922–1929* SON 201a; and the collections *Southern String Bands, Vols. 1 & 2, 1920s–1930s* ARH 220d; *Old Time Fiddle Classics* CTY 507a; *Texas Farewell* CTY 517a; *Folk Music at Newport* VG 77007c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 2* YZ 2016c. For additional information on Robertson see Cohen 1964, Owen 1992, and Malone and McCullough 1975: pp.11–13.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Country/String Band:** as Brilliancy by The Dixie Chicks, Dixie Chicks 9103c. **Bluegrass:** as Brilliancy by Luke and Jenny Anne Bulla RND 0291c; Sam Bush SGH 3849c; Mark O'Connor CMF 015c, RND 0046d; Blaine Sprouse RND 0209c. **British:** as Brilliancy Medley by Fairport Convention A&M 3603a, Stony Plain 1052a.

SELECTION

34

VIC 21294A

“INDIAN WAR WHOOP”

Hoyt “Floyd” Ming and his Pep-Steppers

MEMPHIS, TN: FEBRUARY 13, 1928.

Hoyt Ming, fiddle; Rozelle Ming, guitar; Troy Ming, mandolin.

The Pep-Steppers were a family band who played at dances in the Tupelo, MS, area. Their name refers to the energetic foot stomping of Rozelle Ming, which was heard on their recordings. Rozelle felt the stomping got in the way of the sound, but producer Ralph Peer encouraged its inclusion (Russell 1976a: p.13). The band auditioned for Peer at a local drug store and eventually recorded four songs for him.

Fiddler Hoyt Ming (b. 1902), erroneously listed as Floyd on the original release, worked most of his life as a potato farmer, playing local fairs and dances with the family band. By 1957 he had given up playing, but public interest generated by the *Anthology* eventually led him to reform the band. The Mings eventually played the National Folk Festival in 1973 and were part of a Mississippi contingent at the 1974 Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife. The group also appeared in the film *Ode to Billie Joe*. “Indian War Whoop” is their most famous recording; it combines Ming’s wild fiddling with foot stomping and vocal whoops.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE PEP-STEPPERS see the collection *Traditional Fiddle Music of Mississippi* CTY 528a; For later recordings of Hoyt Ming and the Pep Steppers see *New Hot Times! Homestead* 103a. For additional information on the Pep Steppers see Russell 1976a.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Country/String Band:** as Indian War

Whoop by The Canebreak Rattlers, Flying Crow 104c; Hiter Colvin CTY 3507c; Frank Kittrell, Mississippi Dept. of Archives 002a.

**Bluegrass:** as Indian War Whoop by John Hartford and Bob Carlin RND 0320c. **Folksong Revival:** as Indian War Whoop by The Holy Modal Rounders, ESP-DISK 1068c.

SELECTION

35

VOC 1230

“OLD COUNTRY STOMP”

Henry Thomas

CHICAGO: JUNE 13, 1928.

Henry Thomas, vocal, guitar, and quills.

Blues singer and songster Henry “Ragtime Texas” Thomas (1874–1950s) was in his fifties when he recorded for Vocalion Records between 1927 and 1929. Because of his age, his recordings are one of the few examples of archaic 19th-century African-American music to be preserved on disk. His

unique musical style continues to intrigue modern listeners, especially his use of the quills, a form of pan-pipe made from cane.

Thomas was born and raised in the Big Sandy area of Texas. He played on the streets of Dallas and at country dances. Interviews with his relatives in later years paint him as a hobo and wanderer, often able to travel by train by entertaining the other passengers (McCormick 1974). Folklorist Mac McCormick seems to have had a chance meeting with Thomas in Houston in 1949; he described him as a big man, perhaps 6’3”, and dressed as a hobo (McCormick 1974). Others have also claimed to have seen Ragtime Thomas.

The spirited feel of Thomas’ music found many fans during the folksong revival. Versions of his songs cropped up among those who had little inkling of the man himself. In the notes to his recording *The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan*, Dylan recalls that the song “Honey Just Allow Me One More Chance.” came from a “now dead Texas blues singer” and that he could only remember that his name was Henry. Thomas’ quill solo in the song “Bull Doze Blues” became the basis for the famous introduction in the rock group Canned Heat’s “Going Up the Country.” His “Fishing Blues” also made it into many repertoires (see selection 84).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THOMAS see *Ragtime Texas, His Complete Works 1927–1929* HER 209a; *Texas Worried Blues* YZ 1081c; *Henry Thomas Sings the Texas Blues* OJL 3a; and the collections, *Smithsonian Collection of Classic Blues Singers* SI 101c; *Tex-Arkana-Louisiana Country* YZ 1004c; *Going Away Blues, 1926–1935* YZ 1018c; *Country Bottleneck Guitar Classics, 1926–1937* YZ 1026c; *Voice of the*

*Blues* YZ 1046c; *Roots of Rock* YZ 1063c; *Roots of Robert Johnson* YZ 1073c; *The Music Never Stopped; The Roots of the Grateful Dead* SH 6014c; *Before the Blues, Vol. 1* YZ 2015c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 3* YZ 2017c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THOMAS the best place to turn is Mac McCormick’s notes to HER 209.

SELECTION

36

VIC 21387B

“OLD DOG BLUE”

Jim Jackson

MEMPHIS, TN: FEBRUARY 2, 1928.

Jim Jackson, vocal and guitar.

Jim Jackson (ca. 1890–1937), medicine show performer, street singer, and jug band musician, was from Hernando, MS. He spent his working life as an entertainer, particularly around Memphis and on Beale Street, a center of music and nightlife. Jackson was in a number of jug bands, working at various times with Gus Cannon (selections 59, 72), Will Shade (selections 66, 81), and Furry Lewis (selection 24). After his recording career ended, he continued to be active in traveling shows and as a street performer in the 1930s. His best known song was “Kansas City Blues.” “Old Blue,” a song Jackson knew from his medicine show days, continues to be popular. It was frequently performed by the legendary 1960s rock group the Byrds.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF JACKSON see the collections *Country Blues Classics* BC 5a; *Complete Recorded Works* DOC 5114c; *Big Road Blues* PRS OBC569c; *Wild About My Lovin’* RCA 2461c; *The Blues, 1920–1940* RCA 9051a;

*Blues Masters, Vol. 12* RH 71129c; *St. Louis Town, 1929–1933* YZ 1003c; and *Memphis Jamboree, 1927–1936* YZ 1021c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON JACKSON see Olsson 1970.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Blues:** as Old Blue by Sonny Terry SF 40033c. **Traditional American Folk:** as Old Blue by Irvin Cook BRI 001a. **Folksong Revival:** as Old Blue by Joan Baez VG 41/42 a, VG 2097c, VG 79094a; Guy Carawan FW 3544c, JA 0021a; The Highwaymen ABC-Paramount 543a; Sam Hinton FW 7530c; Cisco Houston FW 7027c, VG 2042a; Ian and Sylvia VG 2113a; Joan O'Bryant FW 2134c; Pete Seeger SF 45022d; Dave Van Ronk PH 1065a; as Old Dog Blue by Glenn Yarbrough RCA 3661a. **Post Revival:** as Old Blue by Brooks Williams GL 2108c.

**Country/String Band:** as Old Blue by Grandpa Jones RCA 0466a; Jim Nabors COL 2368a; T. Texas Tyler, Wrangler 1002a. **Bluegrass:** as Old Blue by The Dillards ELK 7265a. **Blues:** as Old Blue by Furry Lewis FTY 24703a. **Rock:** as Old Blue by The Byrds COL 9755c, COL 46939c; J. J. Cale, Virgin 41480c.

SELECTION "SAUT CRAPAUD"

37

Columbus Fruge  
MEMPHIS, TN: SEPTEMBER 18, 1929.  
Columbus Fruge, vocal and accordion.

VIC 22184A

Columbus "Boy" Fruge, from Arnaudville, LA, started playing accordion as a child and was performing at dances by age 11 (Seeman 1990). Fruge recorded four songs for Victor in 1929. "Saut Crapaud," a popular Cajun folk song, means "Jump Frog."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF FRUGE see the collections *Grand Mamou: A Cajun Music Anthology: The Historic Bluebird Sessions 1928-1941* CMF 013c; *Louisiana Cajun Music, Vol. 1: The First Recordings, The 1920s* OT 108a.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Cajun:** As Saute Crapeau by Isom Fontenet AH 359c; Wallace "Cheese" Reed AH 415c.

SELECTION "ACADIAN ONE-STEP"

38

Joseph Falcon  
ATLANTA, GA: APRIL 19, 1929.  
Joe Falcon, accordion; Cleoma Breaux Falcon, guitar; Ophy Breaux, fiddle; unknown, triangle.

COL 40513F

Joe Falcon (1900-1965) and his wife Cleoma Breaux (d. 1941) cut the first Cajun music record, "Allons à Lafayette," on Columbia in 1928. Falcon and Breaux's recordings were extremely popular in Louisiana and opened up the Cajun record market. Falcon played accordion for dances and Cajun *fais do-dos* in his home area. Cleoma was the vocalist. From a musical family, she also recorded with her brothers, The Breaux Freres (selection 39). She died from injuries sustained in an automobile accident in 1941.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF FALCON see the collections *Le Grand Mamou: A Cajun Music Anthology* CMF 013c; *Raise Your Window* CMF 017c; *Abbeville Breakdown* COL 46220c; *Cajun Dance: Fais Do Do* COL 46784c; *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c; *The Cajuns: Songs, Waltzes and Two-Steps* FW RF21c; *That's My Rabbit* NW 226a; *Old Time Southern Dance Music: The String Bands* OT 100a; *Pioneers of Cajun Accordion* OT 128a; and *Louisiana Cajun Music, Vols. 1-3* OT 108-110a.

SELECTION

39

"HOME SWEET HOME"

The Breaux Freres  
SAN ANTONIO, TX: OCTOBER 9, 1934.  
Clifford Breaux, guitar and lead vocal; Ophy Breaux, fiddle and vocal; Amadée Breaux, accordion and vocal.

VOC 2961B

The Breaux Frères — Amadée (1900-1975), Ophy, and Clifford — were the brothers of Cleoma Breaux (selections 38, 68, 77). Their father Auguste was a legendary Cajun accordionist, whose career unfortunately predated the Cajun recording industry (Strachwitz 1973). Amadée Breaux was the best known of the brothers for having recorded in April, 1929, the first version (as "Ma Blonde Est Partie") of the song "Jolie Blon," which has come to be called "The Cajun National Anthem." They arranged the popular song "Home Sweet Home," written by John Howard Payne and Henry Bishop in 1823, as a waltz.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE BREAUX BROTHERS (Breaux Freres) see the collections *Cajun Fais Do-Do* AH 5004a; *Abbeville Breakdown* COL 46220c; *Cajun Dance Party: Fais Do-Do* COL 46784c; *Louisiana Cajun Music, Vol. 5: The Early Years 1928-1938* OT 114a; and *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c.

SONG INCLUDE **Cajun:** Boi Sec Ardoin and Canray Fontenet AH 1070a.

OTHER VERSIONS are far too numerous too list. They can be accessed by using such discographic tools as the Phonolog or through the OCLC Music Library at your local library.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE

SELECTION

40

"THE NEWPORT BLUES"

The Cincinnati Jug Band  
CHICAGO: JANUARY 1929.  
Bob Coleman, guitar; unknown, harmonica and jug.

PAR 12743A

The Cincinnati Jug Band was led by Bob Coleman, who apparently was from around the Georgia-Alabama state border. He settled in Cincinnati in the 1920s (Kent 1996: p.13). Coleman also recorded two sides as a solo with guitar.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE GROUP see *The Complete Recordings of Bob Coleman and the*

*Cincinnati Jug Band*, Story of the Blues 3519c.

SELECTION

41

"MOONSHINER'S DANCE PART ONE"

Frank Cloutier and the Victoria Cafe Orchestra  
ST. PAUL, MN: 1927.  
The members of the Victoria Cafe Orchestra are unknown.

GEN 6305A

The Frank Cloutier Orchestra does not appear in any jazz or dance band discographies but is assumed to have been from the Minnesota area. The song "Moonshiner's Dance" is better known as the semi-classical piece "Over the Waves," written by the Mexican composer Rosas. It was ➡➡➡

"After I got to know Harry Smith in Boulder in 1989, I borrowed the Folkways *Anthology* from the library there. Harry told me, when I mentioned that I'd been listening to the LPs, that he hadn't heard them in probably thirty years. I made cassette copies for him and dropped them off at his cottage one winter day. When I stopped by later, I found Harry sitting at his desk in the corner by the door. He had these big triangular extension speakers hooked up to his boom box and had headphones on too. Tears filled his eyes. As we sat and listened together, Harry began to reminisce about working on the *Anthology* in the early 1950s: advertising for old records in small rural newspapers in North Carolina, collecting and listening to thousands of 78s, and immersing himself in the preparation of the booklet which accompanied the set. I wish I could remember all that he told me that day, but most of it is lost in the fog of time. I do know that hearing the *Anthology* again was a great delight to Harry, and it was wonderful to see how deeply moved he was by his own creation." —CHUCK PIRTLE, May 1997

a staple at band concerts in the early years of the century (Hansen [Dr. Demento] 1969: p.5). "Over the Waves Waltz" has become a popular fiddle tune.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG  
 INCLUDE **Country/String Band:** as Over the Waves by Clark Kessinger FW 2336c. **Bluegrass:** as Over the Waves by Billy Baker REB 1474a. **Popular:** as Over the Waves by Milton Kaye CK 10350c. **Cajun:** as Over the Waves by Jambalaya,

Swallow 6094a. **Rock:** as Over the Waves Rock by Earl Bostic KNG 597c. **Steel Band:** as Over the Waves by The Brute Force Steel Band CK 1040c.

FOR A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SONG  
 "OVER THE WAVES" see (Wolfe 1976).

SELECTION

42

"MUST BE BORN AGAIN"

Rev. J. M. Gates

NEW YORK: SEPTEMBER 10, 1926.

VIC 35789A

Rev. J. M. Gates, sermon with his congregation.

SELECTION

43

"OH DEATH WHERE IS THY STING"

Rev. J. M. Gates

NEW YORK: SEPTEMBER 10, 1926.

VIC 35789B

Rev. J. M. Gates, sermon with his congregation.

The recorded sermons of Rev. J.M. Gates (1885-c.1941), minister of the Calvary Church in Atlanta, were best-sellers in African-American communities throughout the country during the early part of this century. His records were so popular that he was able to continue to record during the Depression, cutting over 200 sides between 1926 and 1940 (Kent 1996: p.12). He recorded 70 in 1926 alone (Cohn 1992: p.8). "Must Be Born Again" and "Oh Death Where Is Thy Sting" appear as shortened excerpts on the *Anthology*, as the originals were released on a rather odd-sized 12" 78 RPM recording with a longer running time than the average 78 RPM disc.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF GATES see the collections *The Gospel Sound* COL 31086a; *The Gospel Sound, Vol. 2* COL 31595a; *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c; *Complete Recordings in Chronological Order, Vols. 1-9* DOC 5414, 5432, 5433, 5442, 5449, 5457, 5469, 5483, 5484; *An Introduction to*

*Gospel Song* FW RF5c; *Country Gospel Song* FW RBF19c; *Jazz, Vol. 1: The South* FW 2801c; *The Black Country Music of Georgia, 1927-1936* OJL 25a and *Before the Blues, Vol. 1* YZ 2015c.

SELECTION

44

"ROCKY ROAD"

Alabama Sacred Harp Singers

ATLANTA, GA: APRIL 16, 1928.

COL 15274D

Alabama Sacred Harp Singers

SELECTION

45

"PRESENT JOYS"

Alabama Sacred Harp Singers

ATLANTA, GA: APRIL 16, 1928.

COL 15274D

Alabama Sacred Harp Singers

This group is presumably from rural Alabama, which has been a stronghold for sacred harp singing since at least the late 19th century. This style, which combines printed song books with oral tradition, has fallen from favor in many parts of the South. In the late 20th century sacred harp singing has been kept alive among rural Black Americans in south central Alabama by a grassroots, community-based organization called the Wiregrass Singers. Contrary to what Harry Smith says in his notes, this group is not Denson's Alabama Harp Singers. It is an Anglo-American congregation. Another similar group was brought to the Newport Folk Festival in later years to replicate the sounds of these recordings.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

INCLUDE **Gospel:** As Rocky Road by Emmett Brand FW 2655c; Sacred Harp Singers VG 9182a. As Present Joys see *Sacred*

*Harp Singing with Dinner on the Ground* PRS 0739a.

SELECTION

46

"THIS SONG OF LOVE"

The Middle Georgia Singing Convention No.1

ATLANTA, GA: DECEMBER 10, 1930.

OK 8903

The Middle Georgia Singing Convention No.1

This African-American church group, presumably from Georgia, recorded six songs in Atlanta in 1930. Other than that, not much is known about them.



FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE GROUP see the collection *Religious Music: Congregational and*

*Ceremonial* LC LBC 1a.

SELECTION "JUDGEMENT"

47

Rev. Sister Mary Nelson

CHICAGO: APRIL 21, 1927.

VOC B1109

Mary Nelson, vocal; assisted by John Davis and Clarence Nelson, vocal.

Sister Nelson may have been from Memphis, TN, though she recorded in Chicago. The lone photograph of her, from the 1927 Vocalion catalogue, suggests that she may have been born late in the 19th century. There is no doubt, however, that she was a member of a Pentecostal church, a female preacher who probably had a storefront church. Her recorded repertoire consists of three songs and one sermon, performed in her powerful, full-bodied voice with assistance from John Davis and Clarence Nelson.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF NELSON see the collections *Memphis Gospel, 1927-1929*

DOC 5072c and *Nearer My God to Thee* Roots 304a.

SELECTION "HE GOT BETTER THINGS FOR YOU"

48

Memphis Sanctified Singers

MEMPHIS, TN: OCTOBER 1, 1929.

VIC 38559

Bessie Johnson, Melinda Taylor, Sally Sumler, vocals; Will Shade, guitar.

This group of Pentecostal singers was known as the Memphis Sanctified Singers or as Bessie Johnson and Her Sanctified Singers. Based in the Mid-South, they were led by Bessie Johnson, who was originally from Columbus, MS. Little more is known about the group, though they were almost certainly associated with the Church of God in Christ, the largest Black American Pentecostal sect, which is also based in Memphis. On this recording, guitar accompaniment is provided by Will Shade (selections 66, 81), a Victor talent scout, and the leader of the Memphis Jug Band. In addition to her own recordings, Johnson's highly emotional voice can also be heard on recordings by Lonnie McIntorsh, Elder Tarleton Roberts, and Rev. Johnny Blakey.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF BESSIE JOHNSON OR THE GROUP see *Memphis Gospel, 1927-1929* DOC 5072c; *Bessie Johnson 1928-1929* HER 202a; *Rare Blues, 1927-1935* HIS 5829a; *The Southern Sanctified Singers* Roots 328a; and *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Gospel:** The Fellowship Baptist Church SVY14780c; Daniel Winans, Rejoice 8421a. **Folksong Revival:** The Holy Modal Rounders PRS 7720a, PRS 7451a.

SELECTION

49

"SINCE I LAID MY BURDEN DOWN"

The Elders McIntorsh and Edwards' Sanctified Singers

CHICAGO: DECEMBER 4, 1928.

OK 8698

Elders McIntorsh and Edwards, vocal and guitar; Bessie Johnson, Melinda Taylor, vocals and tambourine.

McIntorsh and Edwards (selection 48) were Elders in the Church of God in Christ. They lived in the Mid-South, spending part of their professional and spiritual career in the middle to late 1920s around Memphis. In addition to "Since I Laid My Burden Down," McIntorsh recorded a powerful song about the 1927 Mississippi Flood with the help of Sister Bessie Johnson. An African-American probably born in Mississippi around 1890, he was last known to be living in the "Bootheel" of Missouri (about 100 miles north of Memphis) in the early 1970s. A more recent group from the Church of God in Christ was the Edwin Hawkins Singers, who had a hit song in the 1960s, "Oh Happy Day" (Klatzko n.d.).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF ELDER LONNIE MCINTORSH see the collections *Country Gospel* Song FW RBF19c; *Memphis Gospel, 1927-1939* DOC 5072c; *Bessie Johnson 1928-1929* HER 202a; *In the Spirit* OJL 12a and *Kings of Memphis Town, 1927-1930* Roots 333a.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as When I Lay My Burden Down by Hedy West BF 15003c. **Blues:** as Since I Laid My Burden Down by Mississippi John Hurt VG 19/20c, VG 79248c; as When I Lay My Burden Down by Cat-Iron FW 2389 c; Mississippi

Fred McDowell AH 1021a, AH 304c, TST 5019c. **Gospel:** as Since I Laid My Burden Down by Bernice Reagon FF 411c; as Glory Glory Hallelujah Since I Laid My Burden Down by Blue Spring Mississippi Baptist Delegation SF 40073c; Joseph Spence SF 40066c. **Jazz:** as When I Lay My Burden Down by The Lapsey Brass Band FW 2650c. **Rock:** as When I Lay My Burden Down by Don Nix, Enterprise 1032a.

SELECTION

50

"JOHN THE BAPTIST"

Rev. Moses Mason

CHICAGO: JANUARY 1928.

PAR 12702A

Rev. Moses Mason, vocal and guitar.

Rev. Moses Mason was from Lake Providence, LA. We know only that he recorded eight selections for Paramount early in 1928 including some under his conventional name and some as Red Hot Ole Mose. Two of the selections, "Molly Man" and "Shrimp Man," are work cries, rare examples of street vendors' patters. His other sides are sacred, including two unaccompanied sermons and four songs (most notably "John the Baptist" and "Go Wash in the Beautiful Stream") that reflect the importance of Reconstruction hymnody in shaping the repertoire of Black American Protestants in the 20th century. In addition to the guitar, Mason played the banjo. The song "John the Baptist" has the same refrain, "way up in the middle of the air," as the popular sacred song "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF MASON see the collections *This Old World's in a Hell of a Fix* BIO 12027a; *Black Secular and Religious Music, 1927-1934* DOC 5165c; and *Too Late, Too Late, Vol. 2* DOC 5216c.

SELECTION

51

"DRY BONES"

Bascom Lamar Lunsford

ASHLAND, KY: FEBRUARY 1928.

BR 231

Bascom Lamar Lunsford, vocal and banjo.

Bascom Lamar Lunsford (1882–1973), known as "The Minstrel of the Appalachians," was a banjo player, fiddler, country lawyer, and an avid collector of Appalachian folk songs. He was from South Turkey Creek near Leicester, NC, and traveled extensively around the area collecting and memorizing songs from his neighbors. In 1928 Lunsford founded the Mountain Dance and Folk Song Festival in Asheville. He was involved with it for the rest of his life.

Lunsford also composed a number of songs, including the well-known "Old Mountain Dew." He had a great memory for songs and recorded frequently. In 1949, he recorded his "Memory Collection" for the Library of Congress. Before each song he enthusiastically told its history and the identity of the individual he collected it from. He recorded 350 songs for the Library. Twice before he had recorded over 300 songs for other collectors. His first recordings were done on wax cylinders in 1922 and 1925. Lunsford lived to be 91, and he could be found at his festival every year until his death. He said he first heard "Dry Bones" from a travelling Black preacher named Romney, who came through his area.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF LUNS福德 see *Ballads, Banjo Tunes and Sacred Songs of Western North Carolina* SF 40082c; *Minstrel of the Appalachians* RVR 12-645a; *Music from South Turkey Creek (with George Pegram and Red Parham)* RND 0065a; *Smoky Mountain Ballads* FW 2040c; and the collections *Collection of Mountain Banjo Tunes and Songs* CTY 515a; *The Asch Recordings* FW AA4c; *37th Old Time Fiddler's*

*Convention* FW 2434c; *Anglo-American Ballads* LC AFSL20/1a; *Songs and Ballads of American History and the Assassinations of Presidents* LC AFSL29a; for a video segment of Lunsford see *Times Ain't Like They Used to Be* Yazoo Video 512. For additional information on Lunsford see Jones 1984, Gilpin and Stephens 1966, and Jones et al. 1996.

SELECTION

52

"JOHN THE REVELATOR"

Blind Willie Johnson

ATLANTA, GA: APRIL 20, 1930.

COL 14530D

Blind Willie Johnson, vocal and guitar; Angeline Johnson, vocal.

Some of most popular African-American religious songs ever recorded were made by guitar evangelist Blind Willie Johnson (1900–1949) from Beaumont, TX. He was born near Marlin, TX, in 1900 and became blind at age seven when lye was thrown into his face. Possessed of a gravelly and powerful voice, Johnson recorded thirty songs, which were popular among rural Blacks. Johnson played on the streets and in the Baptist Church throughout his career. His songs have been recorded by many other blues and rock performers over the years, including Eric Clapton, Ry Cooder, and Bob Dylan. His song "If I Had My Way" became popular during the 1960s as performed by Peter, Paul and Mary. In 1949, Johnson's house caught on fire and, although he survived the fire, he became wet, contracted pneumonia, was refused admission to a hospital, and died.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON see *The Complete Blind Willie Johnson* COL 52835c; *Sweeter as the Years Go By* YZ 1078c; *Blind Willie Johnson, 1927–1930* FW RBF10c; *His Story, Annotated and Documented* FW 3585c; *Praise God I'm Satisfied* YZ 1058c; and the collections *Legends of the Blues* COL 46215c; *The News and the Blues* COL 46217c; *The Slide Guitar, Bottles, Knives and Steel* COL 46218c; *Preachin' the Gospel* COL 46779c; *Great Blues Guitarists: String Dazzlers* COL 47060c; *The Gospel Tradition: Its Roots and Branches* COL 47333c; *The Gospel Sound* COL 57160c; *They Sing Praises* COL 67007c; *The Promised Land* COL 66969c; *Country Gospel Song* FW RBF19c; *Jazz Vol. 2: The Blues* FW 2802c; *Blues Masters, Vol. 15* RH 71126c; *Southern Sanctified Singers*

*Roots 328a; The Blues* SI 101c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 2* YZ 2016c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Gospel**: as John the Revelator by The Dixie Hummingbirds VG 77014c; Phil Keaggy, Myrrh 7016997618c. **Blues**: as John the Revelator by Andy Cohen, Bill Ellis, and Eleanor Ellis MMC 8006d; Son House VG 77014c, COL 48867c; Johnny Nicholas, Antones 0032 c. **Bluegrass**: as John the Revelator by Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver SGH 3765c. **Rock**: as This is Serious/John the Revelator by The Silencers RCA 3092c.

SELECTION

53

"LITTLE MOSES"

The Carter Family

CAMDEN, NJ: FEBRUARY 14, 1929.

VIC 40110

Sara Carter, vocal and autoharp; A.P. Carter, vocal; Maybelle Carter, vocal and guitar.

See selection 17.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as Little Moses by Neil Morris ATL 82496c. **Folksong Revival**: as Little Moses by Joan Baez VG 105/6c, VG 2077c, VG 9078a; John McCutcheon, Front Hall 021a. **Post Revival**: as Little Moses by Robin and Linda Williams SGH 3832c. **Country/String Band**: as Little Moses by Roy Acuff CAP 2103a, ELK 303a; Carla Gover

and Charlotte Lester RND 0379c; Roan Mountain Hilltoppers, Cloudlands 001a; and also the later Carter Family group LIB 7230a.

SELECTION

54

"SHINE ON ME"

Ernest Phipps and His Holiness Singers

BRISTOL, TN: NOVEMBER 29, 1928.

BB 5640A

Ernest Phipps and congregation, vocal, group vocal with fiddle, guitar, banjo and piano.

Ernest Phipps and his congregation were from an Anglo-American holiness church in Kentucky. Their first recordings were made on July 21, 1927, in Bristol, TN, shortly before the Carter Family made their famous debut.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF PHIPPS see *Country Gospel Song* FW RBF19c; *The Bristol Sessions* CMH 011c; *Mountain Sacred Songs* CTY 508a; *Bessie Johnson 1928–1929* HER 202a; *Oh My Little Darling* NW 245a; *Old Time Music from Kentucky* RND 1037a; and *Music from Kentucky: Early American Rural Classics, 1927–1937* YZ 2013c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Gospel**: as Let it Shine by Lead Belly SF 40044c; The Mighty Supreme Voices SVY 14549a. **Blues**: as Let Your Light Shine on Me by Blind Willie Johnson YZ 1078c, COL 52835c.

SELECTION

"FIFTY MILES OF ELBOW ROOM"

55

Rev. F.M. McGee

NEW YORK: JUNE 16, 1930.

VIC 23401

Rev. F.M. McGee, vocal with congregation; possibly Red Allen, trumpet, additional guitar and piano.

Rev. Ford Washington McGee was born in Winchester, TN, in October of 1890, and was raised in farming communities just east of Dallas, TX. A descendant of Booker T. Washington on his mother's side, he attended college in Oklahoma. Rev. McGee trained to be a teacher, but he was called by the Spirit and became an evangelist and faith healer. Arizona Dranes, a blind female pianist and vocalist, helped him build a large congregation in the Oklahoma City Church of God in Christ, from which he successfully evangelized throughout the lower Midwest during the early 1920s. In 1925 he moved to Chicago and at first operated a "canvas" church on 33rd Street in the predominately African-American South Side, but within three years he had begun building the first of his "Temples" on Vincennes Street. In the company of Dranes and the Church of God in Christ Jubilee Singers, McGee made the first of his sanctified sermon recordings for Okeh in June of 1927, launching a recording career that would last for almost exactly three years. Most of his records were issued by the Victor label and included an accompaniment by a variety of brass, string, and rhythm instruments. Although his recording career was truncated by the Depression, McGee continued to be active in the Church of God in Christ until his death in 1971. He eventually became a Church Bishop in both Chicago and New York City.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF MCGEE see *The Complete Recorded Works* RST Europe 6031c; *Rev. F.M. McGee* Roots 338a; and the collections, *An Introduction to Gospel Song* FW RF5c; *Religious Music: Congregational and Ceremonial* LC LBC 1a; and *Traditional Jazz in Rural Churches* Truth 1001a. For more information on McGee see Kent 1969 and 1970.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Post Revival**: as *Fifty Miles of Elbow Room* by Iris Dement PH 1138c.

SELECTION

"I'M IN THE BATTLEFIELD FOR MY LORD"

56

Rev. D. C. Rice and His Sanctified Congregation

CHICAGO: FEBRUARY 22, 1929.

VOC 1262

Rev. D. C. Rice and congregation, group vocal with piano, trumpet, trombone, bass, drums, and triangle

Rev. D. C. Rice (1888–1973) was born in Barbour County, AL, and was raised in the Baptist Church. Around 1916 he moved to Chicago and was saved by the Holy Spirit. Rice soon joined Bishop Hill's Church of the Living God, a Pentecostal church located on the predominately Black South Side. Following Hill's death in 1920, Rice took over the leadership of a small Sanctified church and over the next decade built a substantial group of parishioners who worshiped and sang to the accompaniment of an eight or nine piece ensemble. After hearing the recordings of fellow preachers Rev. J.M. Gates and Rev. F.W. McGee, Rice contacted Jack Kapp, a talent scout for Vocalion Records, who initially rejected the group. Kapp eventually rethought his assessment and Rice went on to record 28 selections for Vocalion over a two-year period. During this time, Rice made some of the most exciting holiness recordings (mostly songs without sermons) ever captured on disc. The Depression all but obliterated the record industry and Rice returned to Alabama, becoming the pastor of a small church in Jackson. In 1932 he took over the Oak Street Holiness Church in Montgomery; nine years later he became Bishop of the Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God, which had congregations in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. Rice maintained his home in Montgomery, however, and remained there until his death in March 1973.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF RICE see *Rev. D.C. Rice: The Complete Recorded Works, 1928–1930* DOC 5071c; *Rev. D.C. Rice 1928–1930: Sanctified Singing with Traditional Jazz Accompaniment* HER 212a; and the collection *Gospel Singers and Choirs* Topaz Jazz 1011c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Gospel**: The Badgett Sisters, *Global Village* 214d; James Cleveland SVY 14502a; The Dixie Hummingbirds MCA 20356a; Thomas A. Dorsey, *Sound of Gospel* 3D110a; The Five Blind Boys of Alabama, *Jewel* 3197a; Clarence Fountain, *Jewel* 0143a.

ALLEN GINSBERG ON HARRY SMITH

(from an interview with Allen Ginsberg and Hal Willner recorded June 1993 in New York City):

"Harry Smith's field was visual art as well as ethnomusicology. One day he had no money, and he offered to sell me a rather dark version of this film *Heaven and Earth Magic* for \$100. Every time we'd go up there he'd get me high, and then he'd ask me for money because he was starving. And apparently he went around and did that with everybody. He had no source but he was a genius, like the painter Albert Pinkham Ryder. So I got to be scared of going up there because he'd get me tremblingly high on grass, and he'd show me these amazing movies, and I'd be totally awed by the universality of his genius in music and painting. In addition he could write mad, long, long poems, rhymed. But he'd always hit me up for money. If he could capture me and get me up there and hypnotize me with his films.

In 1965 he recorded the first Fugs album. He did it on his own and then gave it to ESP, who released it. Maybe he gave it to Folkways first. Asch had constantly supplied him with money. If Harry wasn't near someone else, he'd always hit up Moe Asch, who dreaded his coming. Or Harry said he dreaded his coming. Asch was the guy who invented and subsidized and managed Folkways Records.

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Farmers & musicians of Tennessee & North Carolina

## HORTON BARKER

Traditional ballad singer of Virginia  
and ANNIE BIRD

SELECTION

57

### "THE COO COO BIRD"

Clarence "Tom" Ashley

JOHNSON CITY, TN: NOVEMBER 23, 1929.

COL 15489D

Clarence "Tom" Ashley, vocal and banjo.

See selection 3.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Coo Coo Bird by Clarence Ashley and Doc Watson SF 40029c; as the Coo Coo by Mr. and Mrs. Sams SF 40077c; as Cuckoo Bird by John Calloway BRI 001a; Hobart Smith VG 9182a; Doc Watson VG 6576c, VG 155/8c.

**Folksong Revival:** as Coo Coo Bird by Howard Tarnower FW 2353c; as Cuckoo Bird by Rambling Jack Elliott PRS 13033a; Ella

Jenkins SF 45002c. **Post Revival:** as Coo Coo Bird by Pete Kennedy, Rosewood 21a; Robin and Linda Williams FF 359a.

**Country/String Band:** as Coo Coo Bird by Kelly Harrell VIC 40047b; as Cuckoo Bird by The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2399c.

**Bluegrass:** as Cuckoo Bird by Hugh Moore FW 31108c; The Osborne Brothers DEC 4602a, SGH 2203c; Mac Wiseman MCA 23003c. **Rock:** by Big Brother & the Holding Company COL 48845.

SELECTION

58

### "EAST VIRGINIA"

Buell Kazee

NEW YORK: APRIL 20, 1927

BR 154B

Buell Kazee, vocal and banjo.

See selection 6.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as East Virginia by Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson SF 40005c; Pete Steele FW 3828c; and a later version by Kazee was recorded on FW 3810c; as Born in East Virginia by Betty Garland FW 2307c. **Folksong Revival:** as East Virginia by Adiss and Crofut FW 2405c; Joan Baez VG 41/42c, VG 2077c, VG 9078a, VG 73102c; Logan English FW 2316c; The Gateway Singers WB 1295a; Michael Holmes FW8372c;

Cisco Houston FW 2480c; Mickey Miller FW 2393c; Pete Seeger COL 2705a, COL 31949a; Hally Wood, Tannehill 101a; as East Virginia Blues by Mike Seeger RND 0313c; Pete Seeger SF 40018c, VG 17/18c; as Born in East Virginia by The Weavers VG 79075a. **Country/String Band:** as East Virginia by The Iron Mountain String Band FW 2477c; Lily May Ledford GRN 712a; The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2396c; as East Virginia Blues by Clarence Ashley and Garley Foster VOC 02576b, YZ 2019c; The Carter

By 1970 at the Chelsea Hotel I was working with Barry Miles on the gigantic project of putting together all of my recorded poetry. Miles was living at the Chelsea, so I was there listening to tapes. This was the point where Miles had assembled all the tapes, copied them, and was playing me variant versions of 'Howl' and 'Sunflower Sutra' so we could decide which was the earliest, best emotionally, and the best recorded in terms of sound. And Harry was on another floor, or down the corridor, engaged in a long recording project called 'Materials for the Study of Religion and Culture in the Lower East Side,' which included murderers babbling on amphetamine in the streets, jump rope rhymes, bawdy songs, rap, the complete canon of Gregory Corso's early poetry, and all of Peter Orlovsky's songs—which are still at Folkways—at a time when Peter was absolutely great-voiced. I remember his rubric 'Materials for the Study of Religion and Culture in the Lower East Side,' which was a great idea. That was the period—1968 to 1975—when the Lower East Side was really cooking and bubbling.

Harry was also part of a project of recording all of my songs. At that time I was making up a lot of songs and still prolific in that area. The songs we recorded were basically the songs from the book *First Blues*. Later I put them all out because it was the first time I'd written songs. I guess I was inspired to music first by mantra chanting, then setting Blake to music, then Dylan put his hand in and got me interested, and then meeting Happy Traum. Harry recorded me a cappella, or with just my Benares harmonium, as it says on the Folkways LP liner notes. He actually recorded every single

Family BB 5650b, RCA 507a, ACM 22a; The Coon Creek Girls CTY 712a; Roscoe Holcomb SF 40077c. **Bluegrass:** as East Virginia by The Virginia Mountain Boys FW 3829c; as East Virginia Blues by The Country Gentlemen REB 1527a, REB 1104c; The Stanley

Brothers CC 5512c, REB 1495d; JLY 118a, CTY 739d; as When I Left East Virginia by Flatt and Scruggs COL 8751a. **Rock:** as Old Virginia by Cordelia's Dad OMN 2011c.

SELECTION

59

VIC 21267A

**"MINGLEWOOD BLUES"**

Cannon's Jug Stompers with Noah Lewis

MEMPHIS, TN: JANUARY 30, 1928.

Noah Lewis, harmonica; Ashley Thompson, vocal and guitar; Gus Cannon, banjo and jug.

Cannon's Jug Stompers were among the best known of the many jug and skiffle bands in Memphis, TN, in the 1920s and 1930s. The jug band craze started in Louisville, KY, with the Louisville Jug Band but had its biggest impact in Memphis. These bands "busked" on the streets and provided the entertainment for dances. This group included Gus Cannon (1883–1979), Ashley Thompson, and Noah Lewis (1895–1937). Both Cannon and Lewis had been performing professionally since the early years of the century. Cannon (also known as "Banjo Joe") from Red Bank, MS, developed as a minstrel show performer (Olsson 1973). His parents were born into slavery on Henderson Newell's plantation, and his first banjo was made from a bread pan and had a raccoon-skin head (Oliver 1969: p.54). Harmonica player Noah Lewis, from Henning, TN, was perhaps the best showman of the group. Cannon recalled that Lewis could play two harmonicas at once: one through the mouth and one through the nose (Olsson 1973). He died from stab wounds in 1937. Ashley Thompson started playing with Cannon and Lewis as a teenager and played with the group on their early recordings.

Gus Cannon continued to play at dances, on the streets, and in Memphis' Handy Park after his early recording career ended. He was able to do this until his music became unfashionable. He worked as a manual laborer for years, occasionally receiving renewed attention during the skiffle band revival of the 1950s and the jug band revival of the 1960s. He recorded again for music scholar Sam Charters in 1956. In 1963, the folk revival group the Rooftop Singers had a number-one hit

with Gus's song "Walk Right In," and after some dispute, he was able to collect a considerable sum in royalties. He lived out the rest of his life in far more ease than he had been accustomed to during the lean years, passing away in 1979.

Minglewood (Menglewood) was a lumber camp a few miles east of the Mississippi River near Dyersburg, TN. Many of the Southern plantations and work camps featured entertainment and music on weekends and were places for musicians to find work. Noah Lewis had worked Minglewood and composed the song. He recorded it for Victor under his own name as "New Minglewood Blues."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF GUS CANNON'S JUG STOMPERS see *Cannon's Jug Stompers 1927–1930* HER 208a; *The Complete Works 1927–1930* YZ 1082c; and the collections *Blues: Music from the Film* FW ASCH101c; *The Country Blues* FW RF1c; *The Jug Bands* FW RF6c; *Skiffle Bands* FW 2610c; *Wild About My Loving* RCA 2461c; *Blues: The 1920s–1940s* RCA 9052c; *Blues Masters, Vol. 12* RH 71129c; *The Music Never Stopped* SH 6014c; *Frank Stokes' Dream, 1927–31* YZ 1008c; *Memphis Jamboree, 1927–1936* YZ 1021c; *Roots of Rock* YZ 1063c; *Memphis Masters* YZ 2008c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 3* YZ 2017c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION we recommend the notes to HER 208 and YZ 1082.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Blues:** as Minglewood Blues by Cannon's Jug Stompers YZ 1082c; and a later version as The New Minglewood Blues by Noah Lewis Jug Band OJL 5a. **Traditional American Folk:** as Minglewood by Doc and Merle Watson UA 725a. **Rock:** as Minglewood Blues by The Decals, Creative Artistry 2525c; Jane's Addiction, Groove JANAD01c; PH Phactor, Piccadilly 3343c; a 1960s adaptation is The New New Minglewood Blues by The Grateful Dead WB 1689c, Arista 8321a.

SELECTION

60

COL 40517F

**"I WOKE UP ONE MORNING IN MAY"**

Didier Hébert

NEW ORLEANS, LA: DECEMBER 10, 1929.

Didier Hébert, vocal and guitar.

Blind Louisiana guitarist Didier Hébert was the accompanist for accordion player Dewey Segura. Segura was recorded three times but only once with Hébert. According to Ann Savoy, Hébert met Segura at a dance and asked if he could come along to the New Orleans session. Of the four →→→

song I'd written several times until we got the right one he liked. We recorded in a drab room in the Hotel Chelsea on his Wollensack that he'd gotten either from me or from Moe Asch. It cost a couple of hundred bucks, and he really used it. He was a master of the microphone. The entire first Fugs album, which is a classic one, was recorded with just one microphone on the Wollensack.

At my sessions, probably recorded in 1971, Harry amassed a massive collection of recordings, about 15 reel-to-reels. There are several versions of each song. We recorded over weeks and weeks. I'd come every week or twice a week or three times a week and we did quite a lot. And in between he was recording Peter and Gregory and other people in the hotel. And I believe all that material went to the Folkways archives, so there's this great rich treasury of stuff from 1971-72.

The Folkways LP was eventually produced by Ann and Sam Charters. What happened was Harry went into a funny kind of amphetamine tail-spin. He got really paranoid and got moved out of the Chelsea, I think, expelled or something. He couldn't pay his rent and wound up in a series of other hotels, including the Breslin by 1984.

But I think he dumped my tapes off at Folkways. When he got kicked out of the Chelsea he probably brought all of his tapes up to Moe Asch and they were sitting more-or-less unlabeled or only partially labeled in the reel-to-reel boxes. Years later Asch approached Charters and said, 'We've →

songs they performed on December 10, 1929, one was an Hébert solo, and that is the one included here. Segura and Hébert continued to play together after that, but when he recorded again in June 1934, Hébert was not with him (Ann Savoy personal communication).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF HÉBERT see the collection *Songs of Love, Courtship* and *Marriage* LC LBC2a.

SELECTION

61

“JAMES ALLEY BLUES”

Richard “Rabbit” Brown  
NEW ORLEANS, LA: MARCH 11, 1927.

VIC 20578A

Richard “Rabbit” Brown, vocal and guitar.

Songster Richard “Rabbit” Brown was from New Orleans, LA, and recorded six sides for the Victor Talking Machine Company. He was from Jane’s Alley (not James) in the Crescent City. Jane’s Alley was known as an active and dangerous place around the turn of this century. Fellow bluesman Lemon Nash remembered that Brown lived in the “Battlefield,” a neighborhood reputedly so tough that the police would not go in to quell disturbances (Allen and Nash 1959). Jane’s Alley was also Louis Armstrong’s original home.

Rabbit sang on the streets and was a regular performer at the nightclub Mama Lou’s. He also apparently was employed as a singing boatman, entertaining tourists on Lake Pontchartrain. His most famous song was “The Downfall of the Lion,” a ballad about the death of a New Orleans Police Chief.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF BROWN see the collections, *Gambler’s Lament* Country Turtle 6001a; *The Greatest Songsters* DOC 5003c; *Cream of the Crop, 1926–1942* Roots 332a; and *Nearer My God to Thee* Roots 304a.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE

SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival**: as James Alley Blues by Joan Crane FR 121a; The Lyman Family REP 6353a.

**Bluegrass**: as James Alley Blues by Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard RND 0054d.

SELECTION

62

“SUGAR BABY”

Dock Boggs

NEW YORK: MARCH 9, 1927.

BR 118B

Dock Boggs, vocal and banjo; Hub Mahaffy, guitar.

Moran Lee “Dock” Boggs (1898–1971) was from Norton, a coal mining town in the Virginia panhandle. He was influenced by the African-American music in his region, and his banjo playing has a blues feel to it. After recording for Brunswick Records, Boggs hoped a music career might help him avoid a life working in the mines, but he was a miner most of his life, retiring in 1952. He was “rediscovered” in the 1960s and played various folk festivals including the 1963 Newport Folk Festival and the 1969 Festival of American Folklife. Mike Seeger did extensive interviews with Boggs in 1963 (excerpts of which were published on the recording *Folkways* 5458).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF BOGGS see *Dock Boggs* FW 2351c; *Vol. 2* FW 2392c; *Vol. 3* FW 3903c; *His Twelve Original Recordings* FW RBF654c; *Excerpts from Interviews* FW 5458c; *The Legendary Dock Boggs* VF 9025a; and from the collections *Virginia Traditions: Ballads from British Tradition* BRI 002a; *Collection of Mountain Blues* CTY 511a; *Friends of Old Time Music* FW 2390c and *Old Time Music at Newport 1963* VG 9147a, VG 77011c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON BOGGS see Marcus 1997, O’Connell notes to FW RBF 654, and Malone 1964.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk**: as a later version by Boggs VG 9147a; as *Got No Sugar Baby Now* by Frank Proffitt FL 36d; as *Red Rocking Chair* by Doc and Merle Watson FF 252c; Harry and Jeannie West ST 36a. **Folksong Revival**: as *Sugar Baby* by Paul Clayton FW 2007c; Mike Seeger and Alice Gerrard GRN 704a; as *Red Apple Juice* by Spider John Koerner RDH 12c; Hally Wood ST 73a; as *Red Rocking Chair* by The Red Clay

*Ramblers* FF 009a, SGH 8501a, Rykodisc 10034c; Stampfel and Weber RND 3004a. **Country/String Band**: as *Sugar Baby* by Morgan Sexton JA 0066a; as *Honey Babe* by The Carter Family JEMF 101a; as *Red Rocking Chair* by The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2398c, SF 40098c. **Bluegrass**: as *Honey Babe* by Charlie Monroe RCA 552a; as *Red Rocking Chair* by The Country Gentlemen SF 40022c; Charlie Monroe RCA 552a; Muleskinner SRR 6000c; Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin RND 0274c; Virginia Mountain Boys FW 3833c. **Rock**: as *Sugar Baby* by Cordelia’s Dad OMN 2011c; as *Honey Babe* by Maria Muldaur REP 2194a. **British**: as *Red Apple Juice* by Ralph McTell KM 307a.

got all this material from Ginsberg, and we’ve wanted to put out a record of his since the 60s.’ Asch was an old lefty, and he thought I was reviving the spirit of the American left-wing rebellion. But Harry was too tangled up in amphetamine, or whatever he was taking, to do anything with all the material he’d amassed, so Moe gave it over to Sam and Ann Charters. The album was issued in 1981 as Folkways Records FSS 37560, called *Allen Ginsberg: First Blues, Rags, Ballads and Harmonium Songs*. Harry as usual was cantankerous and perfectionist and said, ‘Well, they got all the wrong takes.’ There’s a much better one of ‘Prayer Blues,’ he kept saying, but I never had access to the tapes, so I don’t know what he preferred. ‘Prayer Blues’ is pretty amazing because it’s kind of long, but I had good breath there. I started off a little bit on the wrong key or something and he had to stop and correct me. One thing I remember he kept saying was ‘It’s all right.’ I was tapping my foot and he said, ‘Do that heavier.’ And I said, ‘Won’t the tape pick it up?’ And he said, ‘Yeah, that’s what the old blues people used to do—bang. Make little drum notes on the guitars or bang their foot on the floor as part of the rhythm thing.’ I was amazed at his openness to whatever happened. But he did have a good ear, better than me, so he got me straightened out and we started over again. The interesting thing is that I had to take all the parts on the call and response on that, and I had the strength and breath to do that. It’s a pretty amazing performance when I hear it now. I’m on pitch properly, I think. But nowadays it sounds like some old funny geezer folksinger doing this thing that he’s been doing for 50 years, like you find on old folk records. The one thing Harry liked most of

SELECTION

63

BR 219B

“I WISH I WAS A MOLE IN THE GROUND”

Bascom Lamar Lunsford

ASHLAND, KY: APRIL 1928.

Bascom Lamar Lunsford, vocal and banjo.

See selection 51. Lunsford learned the song in 1901 from Fred Moody, a North Carolina neighbor (notes to Smithsonian Folkways 40082).

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Mole in the Ground by The Chesley Brothers FW 34162c; Doc and Merle Watson FF 252a; and later versions by Lunsford were recorded for Folkways 2040c and the Library of Congress. **Folksong**

**Revival:** as Mole in the Ground by Dave Fredrickson FW 5259c; Cisco Houston VF 9002a; Lisa Kindred VG 143/44c; Mike and

Peggy Seeger RND 8003c; Pete Seeger SF 45022d. **Post Revival:** as Mole in the Ground by Anne Hills FF 70608c, Hogeve 001a.

**Country/String Band:** as Mole in the Ground by The Iron Mountain String Band HRT 101a; Fiddlin' Doc Roberts and Asa Martin GEN 6732b.

SELECTION

64

OK 45125

“THE MOUNTAINEER’S COURTSHIP”

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest V. Stoneman

NEW YORK: MAY 12, 1927.

Ernest Stoneman, harmonica; Hattie Frost Stoneman, guitar.

Ernest V. Stoneman (1893–1968) was born Carroll County, VA. He came from a musical family and grew up learning many of their songs. He married Hattie Frost in 1918 and settled in Bluefield, WV, where he worked as a carpenter. By his own account, in 1924 he heard a recording by fellow West Virginian Henry Whitter and thought he could sing better. He asked for and received auditions with Columbia and Okeh Records in New York. Stoneman’s repertoire featured songs written to commemorate news events and disasters, such as his hugely popular recordings of “The Titanic” and “The Wreck of the C&O.” As Stoneman said, “Any song with a story will go to the people’s hearts because they love stories.” (Wickham and Earle 1967A). His groups included his wife and often some of the finest musicians from the Galax-Hillsville area of Virginia. Of this group, Eck Dunford (selection 9), the Ward Brothers, Oscar Jenkins, and Kahle Brewer deserve special mention.

Stoneman continued to play music during the 1940s and 1950s while supplementing his

income with other work. Part of this time he worked at a naval ordnance factory in Washington, DC, and became involved in the bluegrass music scene sprouting there at the time. His family played together as the Stoneman Family and separately in different bluegrass groups. The Stonemans were recorded by scholar-performer Mike Seeger in 1957 for Folkways, thereby exposing them to folk revival audiences. Stoneman recorded with his family during the 1960s and made numerous television appearances. They were embraced by mainstream country and western music audiences, and by this time Stoneman had earned the respectful title of “Pop.”

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF STONEMAN AND THE STONEMAN FAMILY see *The Edison Recordings* 1928 CTY 3510c; *The Stoneman Family, Sutphin, Foreacre and Dickens* FW 2315c; *Ernest V. Stoneman and His Dixie Mountaineers 1927–1928* HIS 8004a; *Ernest Stoneman with Family and Friends, Vols. 1 and 2* OH 172d and 173d; *For God and Country* OH 90200a; *Last Sessions 1933* OH 199d; *Me and My Autoharp* OH 335d; and the collections *Virginia Traditions: Ballads from the British Tradition* BRI 002a; *Virginia Traditions: Native Virginia Ballads* BRI 004a; *The Bristol Sessions* CMF 011c; *Roots 'n Blues* COL 47911c; *Old Time Mountain Ballads* CTY

3505c; *Galax, Virginia Old Time Fiddler's Convention* FW 2435c; *Mountain Music Played on the Autoharp* FW 2365c; *Songs of Complaint and Protest* LC LBC 7a; *Songs of Death and Tragedy* LC LBC 9a; *Songs of Childhood* LC LBC 13a; and *Close to Home* SF 40097c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON STONEMAN see Wickham and Earle 1967A & B.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as Mountaineer’s Courtship by Peggy Seeger His Master’s Voice 1174 a; as Buffalo Boy by The Bergerfolk FW 32417c; Sam Hinton LC AAFS L21a.

SELECTION

65

VIC 40206

“THE SPANISH MERCHANT’S DAUGHTER”

The Stoneman Family

BRISTOL, TN: OCTOBER 31, 1928.

Ernest Stoneman, harmonica and guitar; Hattie Stoneman, vocal and guitar; Uncle Eck Dunford, fiddle.

See selection 64.

The Stoneman Family originally consisted of Ernest Stoneman and his wife, Hattie. By 1928 cousins Willie and George were playing with them. The family continued to grow, and by 1938 Ernest and Hattie had eleven mouths to feed (on the way to thirteen). Each child grew up playing an instrument and “Pop” Stoneman found himself with a home-grown backup band.

The group continued to play live engagements and radio shows as often as they could up until the 1950s, when various members of the family became involved in the Washington, DC, bluegrass music scene. By the late 1950s they had embarked on a second recording career, and one of

all on that album was ‘Bus Ride Ballad Road to Suva.’ He thought it was the most interesting song because it was a ‘Come-all-ye’ and sort of a classical thing. Like a shanty.

The amazing thing was that in the last year in his life he was awarded a Grammy for the advancement of American folk music. He was dressed up in a tuxedo without a tie, and he stumbled trying to climb on the stage. He was given a moment to make a speech and said very briefly that he was happy to live long enough to see the American political culture affected and moved and shaped somewhat by American folk music, meaning the whole rock-n-roll, Bob Dylan, Beatnik, post-Beatnik youth culture. It was a beautiful speech because it very briefly said that he’d lived long enough to see the philosophy of the homeless and the Negro and the minorities and the impoverished—of which he was one, starving in the Bowery—alter the consciousness of America sufficiently to affect the politics.”

the group's album jackets at the time shows 17 family members (CMH Records 9029). They had a syndicated television program during the 1960s, and daughter Roni became a regular on the popular country music and comedy show "Hee Haw." After Pop's death in 1968, the group continued to play but left his vacant chair on stage with them in the position it had always been.

Today, Roni Stoneman is a fine Scruggs-style banjo player and country music personality. Fiddler Scotty Stoneman was one of the most innovative bluegrass fiddlers ever to have lived. A master of long improvisational solos, he performed with the legendary California bluegrass group, The Kentucky Colonels. Scotty Stoneman died in 1973.

SELECTION

66

VIC 21412

**"BOB LEE JUNIOR BLUES"**

The Memphis Jug Band

ATLANTA, GA: OCTOBER 19, 1927.

Will Shade, guitar; Ben Ramey, kazoo; Will Weldon, guitar; Vol Stevens, banjo-mandolin; Jennie Clayton, vocal.

The leader of the Memphis Jug Band—the earliest jug band in Memphis (Oliver 1969: p.54)—was Will Shade (a.k.a. Son Brimmer, 1898–1966). Like many of his contemporaries in Memphis, Shade was a veteran of medicine shows, and he liked the playing of Clifford Hayes' Louisville Jug Band well enough to start a group of his own. As of 1909, alcohol sales were illegal in Tennessee with the exception of Memphis (Olsson 1990), so Beale Street was wide open and musicians gravitated to it. By the 1920s, there were a number of jug bands working there. Handy's Park was a round-the-clock party, and the group also entertained there for tips.

Although the Memphis Jug Band had many members over the years, its core consisted of Shade, Jab Jones (1880s–1940s), and Charlie Burse (1901–1966). The 1927 outfit represented here included a number of others: Will Weldon, who frequently played with the group; Ben Ramey, one of the group's original members along with Tee Wee Blackman and Lionhouse, a middle-aged man who played an empty whiskey bottle (Olsson 1990); and Vol Stevens, a multi-instrumentalist from nearby Fayette County, who occasionally played with the group. As years went by, only Shade and Burse stayed with the group while other members came and went. By 1934, when they had made their last of sixty recordings, the jug band craze had run its course.

In 1956, music scholar Samuel Charters interviewed Shade and Burse and recorded a group consisting of the two along with Gus Cannon. Shade had been working at a tire plant; Burse as a house painter; and Cannon as a handy man. The resulting album was released on Folkways 2610. Shade and Burse also recorded in 1963 for George Mitchell and Roger Brown with the results published as *Beale Street Mess Around* (Rounder 2006). Both Shade and Burse died in 1966.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THE GROUP see *The Memphis Jug Band* YZ 1067c; and the collections *Jug, Jook and Washboard Bands* BC 2a; *Good Time Blues* COL 46780c; *Country Blues* FW RF1c; *Rural Blues* FW RBF 202c; *Skiffle Bands* FW 2610c, which includes an interview with Shade

and Burse; *Great Jug Bands, 1926–1934* HIS 66a; *The Party Blues* Melodeon 7234a; *Jugs, Washboards and Kazoos* RCA 540a; *Wild About My Lovin'* RCA 2461c; *Beale Street Mess Around* RND 2006a; *Blues Masters, Vol. 12* RH 71129c; *Memphis Masters, 1927–1934* YZ 2008c; and *Before the Blues, Vol. 2* YZ 2016c.

SELECTION

67

VOC 20937A

**"SINGLE GIRL, MARRIED GIRL"**

The Carter Family

BRISTOL, TN: AUGUST 2, 1927.

Sara Carter, vocal and autoharp; Maybelle Carter, guitar.

See selection 17. "Single Girl" is one of the six songs recorded for Ralph Peer at their initial session. Sara Carter's performance on this song is said to have convinced Peer to offer the Carters a contract (Atkins et al. 1973: p.6).

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

and Noah Crase RND 1014a.

INCLUDE **Bluegrass**: Larry Sparks OH 90004a; Dave Woolum

SELECTION

68

COL 14301D

**"LE VIEUX SOULARD ET SA FEMME"**

Cleoma Breaux and Joseph Falcon

NEW YORK: AUGUST 27, 1928.

Cleoma Breaux, vocal and guitar; Joe Falcon, vocal and accordion.

See selection 38. This title can be translated as "The Old Drunkard and His Wife."

SELECTION

69

PAR 12454A

**"RABBIT FOOT BLUES"**

Blind Lemon Jefferson

CHICAGO: DECEMBER 1926.

Blind Lemon Jefferson, vocal and guitar.

Blind Lemon Jefferson (1897–1929) made best-selling blues recordings in the 1920s for Paramount Records and was a major influence on many other blues singers in the Southwest. A native of Wortham, TX, Jefferson was born blind and took up music for a livelihood. He played the streets of Dallas and traveled extensively, sometimes in the company of singers Huddie "Lead Belly" Ledbetter or Josh White, who acted as his eyes. He also was able to earn money as a professional wrestler.

Unfortunately, Jefferson never saw much money from his recordings. He moved to Chicago and was destitute when found frozen to death (Charters 1959: p.66). Lead Belly and Josh White introduced Lemon's music to urban folksong revival audiences. Lead Belly wrote a musical tribute to Jefferson (see SF 40044c), and there were recorded tributes to him at the time of his death, including a sermon by the Reverend Emmett Dickinson called "The Death of Blind Lemon Jefferson."

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF

JEFFERSON *King of the Country Blues* YZ 1069c; *Vol. 1, 1926–1929* BIO 12000a; *Vol. 2: Master of the Blues* BIO 12015a; *Blind Lemon Jefferson* Milestone 47022a; *Immortal* Milestone 2004a; *Vol. 2* Milestone 2007a; *Black Snake Moan* Milestone

2013a and the collections; *Legends of the Blues, Vol. 1* COL 46215c; *Before the Blues, Vol. 2* YZ 2016c; *The Country Blues* FW RF1c; *Jazz Vol. 2* FW 2802c; and *Don't You Leave Me Here* YZ 1004c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON JEFFERSON see Charters 1959: pp.57–72.



SELECTION

70

VIC 23318B

“EXPRESSMAN BLUES”

Sleepy John Estes and Yank Rachell

MEMPHIS, TN: MAY 17, 1930.

Yank Rachell, vocal and mandolin; John Estes, guitar; Jab Jones, piano.

John Adam Estes (1904–1977), from Brownsville, TN, was blind in one eye from a boyhood baseball injury, and his appearance got him the nickname “Sleepy.” Estes had a musical career in Memphis, working the same streets as many of the famous jug bands with whom he occasionally played, like the Three J’s. One of Estes’ frequent partners was harmonica player Hammie Nixon, but the musician he most frequently collaborated with was mandolinist, James “Yank” Rachell (1908–1997). Rachell and Estes met in 1919 and played together for many years. Even though “Expressman Blues” is credited to Estes, Rachell is the vocalist on this selection. At the time of his death, Rachell was still performing with rock musician John Sebastian and might have been the last surviving artist on the *Anthology*. Pianist Jab Jones (1880s–1940s) from Mississippi also played with the Memphis Jug Band (selections 66, 81).

Estes was one of the few bluesmen who continued to record in the 1930s. Starting in 1937, Estes toured with the African-American musical group, The Rabbit Foot Minstrels. Beginning in the 1940s, Estes worked as a farmer until like many of the others on this collection he was brought to the attention of folk revival audiences. He performed at the Newport Folk Festival and the 1970 and 1973 Smithsonian Festivals of American Folklife. He made new recordings with Rachell for the Chicago-based Delmark label during the 1960s.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF ESTES

see *I Ain’t Gonna Worry No More* YZ 2004c; *Sleepy John Estes 1929–1940* FW RBF8c; and from his later career *The Legend of Sleepy John Estes* DMK 603c; *Broke and Hungry* DMK 608a; *Sleepy John Estes in Europe* DMK 611c; *Brownsville Blues* DMK 613c; *Electric Sleep* DMK 619c; and the collections *Kings of Country Blues* AH 1085a; *Mississippi Delta Blues Jam, Vol. 2* AH 386c; *American Folk Blues Festival ‘64* EVD 26100c; *Rural Blues* FW RF202c; *The Country Blues* FW RF1c; *Blues Rediscoveries* FW RF11c; *Songs of Love, Courtship and Marriage* LC LBC 2a; *Blues Masters, Vol. 12* RH 71129c; *The Sun Records Collection* RH 71780c; *Early Mandolin Classics, Vol. 1* RND 1050c; *Blues at Newport* VG 79145c, VG 115/6c; *Bluesmen/Newport* VG 77178c;

*The Newport Folk Festival 1964: The Evening Concerts, Vol. 1* VG 9184a; *Great Bluesmen at Newport* VG 155c; *Harmonica Masters* YZ 2019c; and recordings by Rachell include *Blues Mandolin Man* BP 1986a; *Mandolin Blues* DMK 606a; *Chicago Style* DMK 649c; *Pig Trader Blues* Slippery Noodle 0007d.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Blues:** Lonnie McIntosh, Roots 333a.

SELECTION

71

PAR 12722A

“POOR BOY BLUES”

Ramblin’ Thomas

CHICAGO: NOVEMBER, 1928.

Ramblin’ Thomas, vocal and bottleneck guitar.

Willard “Ramblin’” Thomas (1902–1930s), from Shreveport, LA, was a street performer like many other Texas-Louisiana blues musicians. He recorded eighteen songs during 1929–1932 but mostly

made his living playing on the streets of Dallas. The surprising success of Texas bluesman Blind Lemon Jefferson (selections 69, 75, 76) sent record companies searching for other Dallas singers. His brother, Jesse “Babyface” Thomas (1911–1995), was also a professional blues musician and recording artist until his death.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF THOMAS

see *Willard Thomas and the Dallas Blues Singers* DOC 5107c; *The Complete Recordings* Matchbox 215a; and the collections *Ramblin’ Mind Blues* BIO 12004a; *Country Blues Bottleneck Guitar Classics 1926–1927* YZ 1026c; *The Voice of the Blues: Bottleneck Guitar Masterpieces* YZ 1046c

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Blues:** as Poor Boy by Butterfield’s Blues

Band ELK 73505c; Howlin’ Wolf, Chess 9297c; Brownie McGhee FW 3557c; as Poor Boy Blues by Sam Butler YZ 1016c; Carl Hodges BRI 006a; as Poor Boy Long Ways from Home by Barbecue Bob YZ 2005; Cannon’s Jug Stompers YZ 1082/3c; Gus Cannon YZ 2008c; Cat-Iron FW 2389c; Bukka White TAK 1001a. **Bluegrass:** as Poor Boy Blues by Doc and Merle Watson SGH 2205c. **Folksong Revival:** as Poor Boy by George Gritzbach KM 304a; as Poor Boy Long Way from Home by John Fahey TAK 1002a.

SELECTION

72

VIC 38515B

“FEATHER BED”

Cannon’s Jug Stompers

MEMPHIS, TN: SEPTEMBER 9, 1928.

Noah Lewis, harmonica; Gus Cannon, vocal, banjo and jug; Elijah Avery, guitar.

See selection 59.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

INCLUDE **Blues:** as Lost John by Gary Davis BIO 123c; Sonny Terry FW 2035c. **Traditional American Folk:** as Lost John by Doc Watson VG 9/10c. **Post Revival:** as Lost John by Leo Kottke CAP 11000a. **Country/String Band:** as Lost John by Burnett

and Rutherford RND 1004a; The New Lost City Ramblers FW 31015c; J.C. Suthpin FW 2315c; as Over the Hill I’m Bound to Go by Uncle Dave Macon CTY 3504c, CTY 541a, FW RBF51c. **Rock:** as a adaptation of Feather Bed see and as a related tune Henry Thomas by The Lovin’ Spoonful KS 8054a.

SELECTION

73

BR 131A

“COUNTRY BLUES”

Dock Boggs

NEW YORK: MARCH 9, 1927.

Dock Boggs, vocal and banjo.

See selection 62.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG

INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Country Blues by Doc Watson VG 45/46c, VG 155/8c, VG 79152c; and a later version by Boggs FW 2351c; as Darling Cora by Buell Kazee BR 154b; as Darling Corey by Buell Kazee FW 3810c; B.F. Shelton CTY 3505c; Doug and Jack Wallin SF 40013c; The Watson Family SF 40012c; Nimrod Workman RND 0076a. **Folksong Revival:** as Darling Corey by Holly Near and Ronnie Gibert, Redwood 410a; Pete Seeger SF 40018c, COL 9416a; The Weavers VG 15/16c, VG 73101c. **Country/String Band:** as Country Blues by Bruce Hutton FW 2402c; The New Lost City Ramblers FF 102a, FW 2395c; as Darling

Corey by Roscoe Holcomb FW 2374c; as Dig a Hole by The Maddox Brothers and Rose COL9997a. **Bluegrass:** as Country Blues by Jody Stecher and Kate Brislin RND 0284c; as Darling Corey by Flatt and Scruggs COL 2045a; The Monroe Brothers RCA 5510a, RCA 507a; Bill Monroe MCA 11048c; The Seldom Scene REB 1511c, REB 1101c; as Darling Corey is Gone by Bill Keith and Jim Rooney WTR 004a; as Dig a Hole in the Meadow by Red Allen FW 31088c; Lester Flatt RCA 0588a; Flatt and Scruggs COL 8845a; as Poor Rambler by Dave Evans and River Bend REB 1616d; The Virginia Mountain Boys FW 3833c. **Rock:** as Dig a Hole by The Blood Oranges ESD 80472c. **British:** as Country Blues by John Renbourn REP 2082a.

SELECTION

74

"99 YEAR BLUES"

Julius Daniels

ATLANTA, GA: FEBRUARY 19, 1927.

VIC 20658B

Julius Daniels, vocal and guitar.

Born in Denmark, SC, Julius Daniels (1903–1947) lived in Pineville from 1912–1930. He was one of the first of the southeastern bluesmen to record (Bastin 1986: p.196). In later years, he mostly lived in Charlotte, NC. After his recording career, Daniels worked at a number of jobs including that of fireman.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF DANIELS see *Georgia Blues and Gospel* DOC 5160c.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Blues:** as Viola Lee Blues by Cannon's

Jug Stompers YZ 1082/3c. **Folksong Revival:** as 99 Year Blues by Jim Kweskin REP 6464a; Chris Smither ADE 1031a. **Rock:** as 99 Year Blues by Hot Tuna, Grunt 1004a, RCA 2591a.

SELECTION

75

"PRISON CELL BLUES"

Blind Lemon Jefferson

CHICAGO: FEBRUARY 1928.

PAR 12622B

Blind Lemon Jefferson, vocal and guitar.

SELECTION

76

"SEE THAT MY GRAVE IS KEPT CLEAN"

Blind Lemon Jefferson

CHICAGO: FEBRUARY 1928.

PAR 12608B

Blind Lemon Jefferson, vocal and guitar.

See selection 69.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Blues:** as See That My Grave Is Kept Clean by Mike

Bloomfield TAK a; Lightnin' Hopkins SF 40019c, VF 9000a; Furry Lewis AH 1041a; James Solberg, Atomic Theory 1117c; as One Kind Favor by Cephas and Wiggins FF 580c; as Two White Horses in a Line by Smith Casey HER 211a, LC AFSL4a; as Six White Horses by Mississippi Fred McDowell TST 5019c. **Traditional American Folk:** as One Kind Favor by Leslie Riddle RND 0299c. **Folksong Revival:** as See That My Grave Is Kept Clean by Bob Dylan COL 8579c, COL 62022c; Dave Van Ronk SF 40041c.

FW 2383a; as One Kind Favor by Liz Getz FW 2442c; Koerner, Ray and Glover RDH 76c; Peter, Paul and Mary WB 1555a. **Country/String Band:** as Two White Horses in a Line by Evans and McClain YZ 2015c, DOC 5044c. **Rock:** as One Kind Favor by Canned Heat LIB 27200a; The Dream Syndicate, Restless 72758c; Thelonicus Monster, Relativity 88561c. **British:** as See That My Grave Is Kept Clean by Martin Simpson, Thunderbird 5001a.

SELECTION

77

"C'EST SI TRISTE SANS LUI"

Cleoma Breaux and Joseph Falcon

ATLANTA, GA: APRIL 18, 1929.

COL 40508F

Joe Falcon, vocal and accordion; Cleoma Breaux, guitar; Ophy Breaux, fiddle.

See selection 38. The song title means "It's So Sad without Him."

SELECTION

78

"WAY DOWN THE OLD PLANK ROAD"

Uncle Dave Macon

NEW YORK: APRIL 14, 1926.

VOC 15321

Uncle Dave Macon, vocal and banjo; Sam McGee, guitar.

Called "The Dixie Dewdrop," David Harrison Macon (1870–1952), from McMinnville, TN, was an early recording star. He is one of the oldest people represented in the *Anthology*. Uncle Dave was the first star of the Grand Ole Opry and one of its most beloved members for the quarter century he was on the air. His family owned a hotel in Nashville at which many a passing vaudeville musician stayed, and he was undoubtedly influenced by many of these individuals. His performances were filled with enthusiasm, humor, and numerous banjo tricks, creating an overall impression that recalls the aesthetics of the medicine show (Malone 1985: p.72) Macon was proprietor of the Midway Mule and Wagon Transportation Company and hauled materials from town to town, entertaining passers-by as he worked. His professional show business career did not start until he was middle-aged. Many of his songs paint pictures of social and political life in the South. "Down the Old Plank Road" is about working on a Georgia chain gang. Macon's recordings have been extensively reissued.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF MACON see *Travelin' Down the Road* CTY 115c; *Go Long Mule* CTY 3504c, CTY 545d; *Hall of Fame Series* MCA 10564c; *Vol. 2. Over the Mountain* OH 183d; *Hill Billie Blues, Vol. 3* OH 184d; *Just from Tennessee* OH 185d; *Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy* OH 148d; *Laugh Your Blues Away* RND 1028a; *Uncle Dave Macon* FW RF51c; *Early Recordings* CTY 521d; and the collections *Old Time Mountain Ballads* CTY 3505c; *Country Gospel Song* FW RBF19c; *Dance Music: Breakdowns and Waltzes* LC LBC 3a; and *Solo and Display Music* LC LBC 4a.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MACON see Rinzler and Cohen 1969A & B, Pankake and Nelson 1963, and Wolfe 1975.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as Way Down the Old Plank Road by Pat Dunford PRT 5012a. **Country/String Band:** as Way Down the Old Plank Road by The Highwood String Band RND 11569c, RND 0045a; as My Wife Died Saturday Night by Humphrey Bate and the Possum Hunters CTY 541a; The New Lost City Ramblers by SF 40040c, FW2492c.

SELECTION

79

"BUDDY WON'T YOU ROLL DOWN THE LINE"

Uncle Dave Macon

CHICAGO: JULY 25, 1928.

BR 292

Uncle Dave Macon, vocal and banjo; Sam McGee, vocal and guitar.

See selection 78.

Macon's songs often dealt with Southern history. This one is about the Coal Creek Rebellion, which took place in East Tennessee in the 1890s. Mining companies hired convict laborers to try to break the miners' union. In an armed rebellion, the miners freed the convicts, but the leaders of the rebellion were sent to prison.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as Buddy Won't You Roll Down the Line by Tom Paley, Global Village 309d; Nick Reynolds and John Stewart TAK 7106a; as Roll Down the Line by The Gateway

Singers DEC 8671a; Pete Seeger FW 2412c, SF 40058c. **Country/String Band:** as Roll Down the Line by The Allen Brothers VIC 23551b, RCA 8417c, OT 115a.

SELECTION "SPIKE DRIVER BLUES"

80

Mississippi John Hurt

NEW YORK: DECEMBER 28, 1928.

OK 8692

Mississippi John Hurt, vocal and guitar.

See selection 21.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Spike Driver Blues by Jean Ritchie and Doc Watson SF 40005c, VF 9026a; Doc Watson UA 601a, VG 9/10c, VG 155/8c. **Folksong Revival:** as

Spike Driver Blues by Alan Senauke and Eric Thompson FF 393a. **Blues:** as Spike Driver Blues a later version by Hurt on VG 79220c, VG 77002c. **Rock:** as Spike Driver Blues by Jerry Garcia, Grateful Dead 40054c.

SELECTION "K.C. MOAN"

81

The Memphis Jug Band

MEMPHIS, TN: OCTOBER 4, 1929.

VIC 38553

Tee Wee Blackman, lead vocal and guitar; Will Shade, vocal and harmonica; Charlie Burse, guitar; Ben Ramey, vocal and kazoo; Jab Jones, jug.

See selection 66. This may have been a railroad work song (Don Kent, notes to Yazoo 2016). It was a standard among blues revival performers during the 1960s (Raim et al. 1973: p.102).

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as K.C. Moan by John B.

Sebastian MMS 65137c; Mark Spoelstra FW 3572c.

SELECTION "TRAIN ON THE ISLAND"

82

J. P. Nestor

BRISTOL, TN: AUGUST 1, 1927

VIC 21070A

J. P. Nestor, vocal and banjo; Norman Edmonds, fiddle.

J. Preston Nestor (1876–1967) recorded four songs at the 1927 session in Bristol, TN, and never recorded again. He had been invited to a second session in New York but refused to leave his Hillsville, VA, home (Davis and Nobley 1973). Fiddler Norman Edmonds (1889–1976) did continue to play, as "Uncle Norm," with The Old Timers, a string band from the Galax, VA, area. "Train on the Island" has become a favorite tune in the Virginia-North Carolina region due to the influence of Nestor's recording.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF NESTOR see the collections *Rural String Bands of Virginia* CTY 3502c and *Round the Heart of Old Galax, Vol. 3* CTY 535a.

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF EDMONDS see *Train on the Island* DU 33002a and the collection *Galax Old Time Fiddler's Convention* FW 2435c.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON

NESTOR AND EDMONDS see Davis and Nobley 1973.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Country/String Band:** as Train on the Island by The Iron Mountain String Band FW 2473c; Tommy Jarrell CTY 778d; Velma Nester LC AAFS 1343B1; The New Lost City Ramblers FW 2496c, VF 9003a; The Ward Brothers FW 3832c.

**Bluegrass:** as Train on the Island by Hazel Dickens and Alice

Gerrard SF 40065c, FW 31034c. **Folksong Revival:** as Train on the Island by The Double Decker String Band MMC 9021d; Peggy

Seeger, His Masters Voice 1174a.

SELECTION "THE LONE STAR TRAIL"

83

Ken Maynard

LOS ANGELES, CA: APRIL 14, 1930.

COL 2310D

Ken Maynard, vocal and guitar.

Known as "The American Boy's Favorite Cowboy," Ken Maynard (1895–1973) was the first singing cowboy in the movies, starring in over 300 films. Although he claimed Texas as his home, Maynard was born in Indiana and came to Hollywood in 1923. He had worked as a cowboy, a rodeo and circus performer, and a stuntman touring with the Kit Carson show in 1914. Shortly thereafter he was a featured performer with Ringling Brothers Circus, specializing in rope tricks and trick riding. His first films were silent, and his 1934 film *In Old Santa Fe* was Gene Autry's screen debut.

Maynard had one session in 1930, at which eight songs were recorded. "Lone Star Trail," the most popular, came from the 1929 film *The Wagon Master*. The song dates back to the days of cattle drives (Logsdon personal communication).

FOR ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS OF MAYNARD see the collections *Silver Screen Cowboys* COL 57475c; *Make Me a Cowboy Again for a Day* MMC 9106d; and *When I Was a Cowboy, Vol. 1* YZ 2022c. For additional information on Maynard, see Griffis 1973 and the recording, *Back in the Saddle Again* NW 314/15a

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Folksong Revival:** as Lone Star Trail by Dave Fredrickson SF 40043c, FW 5259c; Merrick Jarrett RVR 12-631a.

SELECTION "FISHING BLUES"

84

Henry Thomas

CHICAGO: JUNE 13, 1928.

VOC 1249

Henry Thomas, vocal, guitar, and quills.

See selection 35.

OTHER RECORDED VERSIONS OF THE SONG INCLUDE **Traditional American Folk:** as Fishing Blues by Doc Watson SGH 2205c; **Folksong Revival:** as Fishing Blues by Jim Kweskin VG 9234a, VG 79270a; John B. Sebastian

REP 2036a; Mike Seeger VG 154c; Neil Woodward BDG 003c. **Blues:** as Fishing Blues by Taj Mahal COL 18c, COL 30619a, COL 34466a, COL 36528c. **Rock:** as Fishing Blues by The Lovin' Spoonful KS 8054a.

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KEY TO RECORD LABELS

ACM	ACM	DSC	Disc	KWH	Kanawha	RVR	Riverside
ADE	Adelphi	DU	Davis Unlimited	L7	Lucky Seven	SF	Smithsonian Folkways
ADF	Audiofidelity			LC	Library of Congress		
AFJ	Archive of Folk and Jazz	DYB	Dyer-Bennet			SGH	Sugar Hill
		EDS	Edison	LIB	Liberty	SH	Shanachie
AH	Arhoolie	ELK	Elektra	LON	London	SHS	Shasta
ALL	Alligator	EMR	Emarcy	MAP	Mapleshade	SIR	Sire
ARB	Arbor	EPC	Epic	MCA	MCA	SON	Sonyatone
ARG	Argo	ESD	East Side Digital	MER	Mercury	SRR	Sierra
ATL	Atlantic			MMC	Marimac	ST	Stinson
ATT	Atteiram	EVD	Evidence	MMS	Musicmasters	STR	Starday
AU	Aurora	FF	Flying Fish	MNS	Minstrel	SVY	Savoy
BB	Bluebird	FKE	Folk Era	MNT	Monitor	TAK	Takoma
BC	Blues Classics	FL	Folk Legacy	MTN	Mountain	TFS	Tennessee Folklore Society
BDG	Black Dog	FLR	Folklyric	MRW	Merriwang		
BET	Bethlehem	FLY	Flyright	NW	New World		
BF	Bear Family	FR	Fretless	OH	Old Homestead	TL	Time Life
BG	Blue Goose	FTY	Fantasy			TPC	Topic
BIO	Biograph	FV	Folk Variety	OJL	Origin Jazz Library	TQ	Turquoise
BLK	Blackthorn	FW	Folkways			TRD	Tradition
BR	Brunswick	GEN	Gennett	OK	Okeh	TRE	Treasure
BRI	BRI	GL	Green Linnet	OMN	Omnium	TRL	Traditional
CAP	Capitol	GRN	Greenhays	OT	Old Timey	TST	Testament
CAM	Camden	GS	Guest Star	PAR	Paramount	UA	United Artists
CC	Copper Creek	GUS	Gusto	PDM	Piedmont	VET	Vetco
CHR	Chrysalis	HER	Herwin	PH	Philo	VF	Verve/Folkways
CK	Cook	HIS	Historical	PRS	Prestige		
CLR	Collector	HMY	Harmony	PRT	Puritan	VG	Vanguard
CMF	Country Music Foundation	HRT	Heritage	RCA	RCA	VIC	Victor
		HW	High Windy	RDH	Red House	VOC	Vocalion
COL	Columbia	JA	June Appal	REB	Rebel	VV	Verve
CPT	Counterpoint	JEMF	JEMF	REP	Reprise	WB	Warner Brothers
CRL	Coral	JES	Jesup	RH	Rhino		
CTY	County	JLY	Jalyn	RND	Rounder	WGO	Wango
DLY	Dailey	KM	Kicking Mule	RR	Rural Rhythm	WP	World Pacific
DMK	Delmark	KNG	King	RST	Rooster	WTR	Waterfront
DOC	Document	KS	Kama Sutra	RVH	Revonah	YZ	Yazoo

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ORIGINAL 1952 ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC

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## TECHNICAL NOTE

The sound for this remastered compilation comes from several sources. First is the analog tape master made in 1952 by Harry Smith, Moe Asch, and Peter Bartok for the original release of the *Anthology*. For its time, it is an excellent transcription from the original discs. For the most part, the tape retains the sound of these late-1920s and early-1930s 78s quite well. Serious problems arose, however, where the tape had been spliced or where the original record had not been well manufactured. It became necessary, therefore, that new digital transfers of 78 RPM discs be made.

We obtained these old discs from several record collectors, compared them to each other and to the master tape, and used whichever one sounded best. While sometimes our selection had to be the lesser of the evils, other times we hit on a source so good it seemed to leap out of the speakers at us. We are indebted to many people for helping us locate the source materials.

Editing and mastering were done on a digital work station using Sonic Solutions and NoNoise™ software. We tried to remove as much surface noise, pops, and clicks as possible without removing musical sound. Therefore, you will still hear some noise and, obviously, some tracks are quite a bit noisier than others. In all cases, this variance is due to the quality of the original recording, the quality of the manufacturing of the disc, and the condition of the disc used as the source, whether the transfer was made in 1952 or in 1997. We have consistently adhered to the idea that it is far better to listen to some noise with the music than to eliminate all the noise and a good part of the audio spectrum with it. We hope you concur.

The speed of many commercially-produced 78 RPM recordings actually varies from 78 revolutions per minute, so in mastering we tried to correct for this. Sometimes we could compare the recorded sound of an instrument that has fixed reeds (such as a harmonica, an accordion, or an organ) with the sound of a digital keyboard. We then adjusted the recorded pitch slower or faster to match as closely as possible the nearest key on the keyboard. These pitch changes were not drastic transformations and can be measured in tenths and hundredths of semitones. Since fixed reeds have been factory tuned, we believe these tracks are now more properly pitched. We used our best judgement in altering the speed of selections with only stringed instruments, which can be tuned to each other out of true pitch, and on the occasional selection where a voice sounded unnatural because of the record speed's being too fast or too slow.

For some selections we were seeking alternate sound sources right up to the manufacturing deadline, but ultimately, we hope and believe we have succeeded in re-producing an anthology you will enjoy through many listenings.

PETE REINIGER, MAY 1997

## ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch and Marian Distler in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 2,200 albums that were always kept in print. The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Moses Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are available on high-quality audio cassettes, each packed in a special box along with the original LP liner notes. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videotapes and recordings to accompany published books, and other educational projects. The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Paredon, and Dyer-Bennet record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies. They are one of the means through which the Center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding. You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store.

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For further information about all the labels distributed through the Center, please consult our internet site: [HTTP://WWW.SI.EDU/FOLKWAYS](http://www.si.edu/folkways), which includes information about recent releases and a database of the approximately 35,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings. Click on Data Base Search.

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# AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC



VOLUME ONE  
BALLADS

FP 251

VOLUME TWO  
SOCIAL  
MUSIC

VOLUME THREE  
SONGS

FP 253

EDITED BY HARRY SMITH

806  
11  
52



## THIS HANDBOOK CONTAINS:

- I - NUMERICAL LISTING OF SELECTIONS IN VOLUMES ONE, TWO, AND THREE (NOS. 1 TO 84), WITH INFORMATION ON ORIGINAL ISSUES, CONDENSATIONS OF TEXTS, NOTES ON RECORDINGS, AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND DISCOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES.
- II - ALPHABETICAL INDEX TO TITLES, ARTISTS, FIRST LINES, SUBJECTS, AND INSTRUMENTATION OF ITEMS NO 1 TO 84.
- III - CONSOLIDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF IMPORTANT REFERENCES TO SELECTIONS FOUND IN THIS SET.

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# Foreword



BY HARRY SMITH

EDITOR, AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC, VOLUMES ONE, TWO, AND THREE.

By 1888 many important recordings of folk songs had been cut on cylinders, but it was not until that year and the perfection of the gramophone disc by Emile Berliner that inexpensive records were made available to the public. Out of about thirty folk song titles issued by Berliner between 1895 and 1899 the most important were, no. 3012, an exciting banjo and vocal version of "Who Broke the Lock" by Cousins and Demoss (recorded New York November 14, 1895); no. 942, "Dixie", with partisan lyrics, by George G. Gaskin (Washington D.C. October 14, 1896); no. 670 "Virginia Camp Meeting" by George Graham and Billy Golden (Washington D.C. March 8, 1897) containing the first authentic American religious music on records; and no. 0730, "A Day in a Country School" by George Graham (New York November 15, 1899) which includes a unique recording of chanted mathematical problems.

During the early 1900's a number of releases were made, the most famous being Uncle Josh's unaccompanied "Frog Went a Courting" on the Columbia, Victor and Edison versions of "A Meeting of the School Directors", also Billy Golden's several cuttings made at that time of "Roll on the Ground" and "Rabbit Hash" have very full texts of these well known songs.

The modern era of folk music recording began shortly after World War I when Ralph Peer, of Okeh Records, went to Atlanta with portable equipment and a record dealer there offered to buy 1000 copies if Peer would record the singing of circus barker "Fiddling" John Carson. "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane" and "The Old Hen Cackled and the Rooster's Going to Crow" were cut, and according to Peer "it was so bad that we didn't even put a serial number on the records, thinking that when the local dealer got his supply that would be the end of it. We sent him 1,000 records which he got on Thursday. That night he called New York on the phone and ordered 5,000 more sent by express and 10,000 by freight. When the national sale got to 500,000 we were so ashamed we had 'Fiddling' John come up to New York and do a re-recording of the numbers. Mr. Peer invented the terms "hillbilly" records and "race" records. Concerning the latter he says: "We had records by all foreign groups: German records, Swedish records, Polish records, but we were afraid to advertise Negro records, so I listed them as 'race' records and they are still known as that." Unfortunately these unpleasant terms are still used by some manufacturers.

Only through recordings is it possible to learn of those developments that have been so characteristic of American music, but which are unknowable through written transcriptions alone. Then too, records of the type found in the present set played a large part in stimulating these historic changes by making easily available to each other the rhythmically and verbally specialized musics of groups living in mutual social and cultural isolation.

The eighty-four recordings in this set were made between 1927, when electronic recording made possible accurate music reproduction, and 1932 when the depression halted folk music sales. During this five year period American music still retained some of the regional qualities evident in the days before the phonograph, radio and talking picture had tended to integrate local types. Volumes 4, 5, and 6, of this series, will be devoted to examples of rhythm changes between 1890 and 1950.

SAMPLE CATALOGUE ENTRY

NUMBER OF RECORDING  
IN THIS SET.

00

INFORMATION FOUND  
ON ORIGINAL LABEL

THIS LINE GIVES THE TITLE  
(OTHER DATA FOUND ON ORIGINAL LABEL)  
THIS LINE GIVES THE ARTIST  
THIS LINE GIVES THE INSTRUMENTATION  
RECORDING DATE  
ORIGINAL ISSUE NUMBER (MASTER NUMBER)

CONDENSATION  
OF LYRICS

FOR THE BALLADS (NOS. 1 TO 27) THE TEXTS ARE REDUCED TO A FORM SIMILAR TO THAT OF A NEWSPAPER HEADLINE. FOR THE DANCES, RELIGIOUS SELECTIONS, AND SONGS (NOS. 28 TO 84) THE KEY WORDS AND PHRASES, AND TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS ARE CONDENSED AND PRINTED IN THE SAME ORDER THEY OCCUR IN THE SELECTION REFERRED TO.

GENERAL NOTES:

INFORMATION, OTHER THAN THAT FOUND ON THE RECORD ITSELF, IS PRINTED HERE. FOR FURTHER DATA CONSULT ITEMS LISTED IN THE BIBLIOGRAPHY.

LIST OF RECORDS  
REFERRED TO

DISCOGRAPHY: RECORDS LISTED HERE, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED, ARE OTHER IMPORTANT RECORDINGS OF THE SELECTIONS IN THIS SET.

LIST OF BOOKS  
REFERRED TO

BIBLIOGRAPHY: THE NAMES SUCH AS ARNOLD, BARRY I, ETC, REFER TO THE KEY WORDS PRINTED BEFORE EACH ENTRY IN THE CONSOLIDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY. FOR EXAMPLE, ARNOLD-60 MEANS THAT ON PAGE 60 OF ARNOLD'S FOLK SONGS OF ALABAMA A REFERENCE IS FOUND TO THE SELECTION REFERRED TO.

1

HENRY LEE  
BY DICK JUSTICE  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1932.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 367

SCORNING OFFER OF COSTLY TRAPPINGS, BIRD REFUSES AID  
TO KNIGHT THROWN IN WELL BY LADY

CHILD (NO. 68) GIVES ELEVEN VERSIONS OF THIS SONG UNDER THE TITLE YOUNG HUNTING. ALL OF HIS TEXTS ARE FROM SCOTLAND AND HE ALSO MENTIONS SEVERAL SIMILAR SCANDINAVIAN BALLADS. HIS "F" (FROM MOTHERWELL'S MS. P. 61) IS MOST LIKE THE PRESENT RECORDING. THIS BALLAD IS CURRENT IN MANY PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES (SEE BIBLIOGRAPHY), BUT HAS PROBABLY NOT BEEN FOUND FOR OVER 100 YEARS IN THE BRITISH ISLES.

DISCOGRAPHY: LOWE BONNIE, JIMMY TARLTON.  
COLUMBIA 15763D.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-60; BARRY-1-122; BELDEN-34; CHILD-111-142  
COX-42; DAVIS-182; GORDON-66; HUDSON-77; LUNSFORD-22; MORRIS-263  
RANDOLPH-1-90; SANDBURG-64; SCARBOROUGH-11-134; SHARP-1-101;  
SMITH-107; OWENS-44

2

FATAL FLOWER GARDEN  
(NELSON-TOUCHSTONE)  
BY NELSTONE'S HAWAIIANS  
VOCAL DUET WITH GUITARS.  
RECORDED IN 1930.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-40193B

GAUDY WOMAN LURES CHILD FROM PLAYFELLOWS; STABS HIM  
AS VICTIM DICTATES MESSAGE TO PARENTS

IN ITS EARLIEST VERSIONS THE SUBJECT OF THIS BALLAD IS RITUAL MURDER; SEE CHILD (NO. 155) "SIR HUGH". OF CHILD'S 18 VERSIONS "G" (FROM PHILADELPHIA) AND "K" (SHROPSHIRE) ARE MOST LIKE THE PRESENT RECORDING. THE EVENTS DESCRIBED IN THE BALLAD CAN BE FOUND IN THE ANNALS OF WAVERLY UNDER THE YEAR 1255. FOR ANOTHER BRITISH VERSION SEE SHARP'S FOLK SONGS OF SOMERSET (NO. 68).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-42; BARRY-1-461; BELDEN-69; BREWSTER-126;  
CHILD-V-233; COX-120; DAVIS-400; EDDY-66; HENRY-102; HUDSON-116;  
MORRIS-302; SCARBOROUGH-11-171; SCARBOROUGH-1-53; SHARP-1-222;  
SMITH-148

3

THE HOUSE CARPENTER  
BY CLARENCE ASHLEY  
VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO.  
RECORDED IN 1930  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15654D (W194982)

WIFE AND MOTHER FOLLOWS CARPENTER TO SEA; MOURNS  
BABE AS SHIP GOES DOWN

CHILD (NO. 243 JAMES HARRIS-THE DAEMON LOVER) GIVES 6 VERSIONS OF THIS BALLAD (ALL SCOTTISH) FROM ORAL TRADITION AND TWO BROADSIDE PRINTINGS ONE OF WHICH, "B" (FROM THE RAMBLERS GARLAND, 1785) IS VERY SIMILAR TO THE AMERICAN TEXTS. THE SUPERNATURAL THEME OF THE EARLY VERSIONS HAS DISAPPEARED ALMOST COMPLETELY IN AMERICA.

FOR OTHER BRITISH VERSIONS SEE GAVIN GREIG'S LAST LEAVES OF TRADITIONAL BALLADS AND BALLAD AIRS NO. 84. BARING-GOULD'S SONGS OF THE WEST NO. 76.

DISCOGRAPHY: THE HOUSE CARPENTER, BRADLEY KINCAID.  
BLUEBIRD 5255. CAN'T YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOUR HEART WAS MINE. CAROLINA TAR HEELS. VICTOR 40219.  
SEE ALSO AAFS 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BARRY-1-304; BARRY-11-37, 74; BELDEN-79;  
BREWSTER-136; CHILD-V111-360; COX-139; DAVIS-439; EDDY-70;  
GARDNER-54; HENRY-113; HUDSON-119; MORRIS-311; POUND-10;  
RANDOLPH-1-166; SANDBURG-66; SCARBOROUGH-11-150; SHARP-1-244;  
SMITH-151; STOUT-11; THOMAS-1-172 OWENS-56

4

DRUNKARDS SPECIAL  
BY COLEY JONES  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN DALLAS TEXAS, 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 14489D (W149558)

WIFE'S LOGIC FAILS TO EXPLAIN STRANGE BEDFELLOW TO  
DRUNKARD

TWO-BRITISH TEXTS OF THIS SONG ARE GIVEN IN CHILD NO. 274-(OUR GOODMAN, THE MERRY CUCKOLD AND KIND WIFE.) OF WHICH "A" FROM HERD'S ANCIENT AND MODERN SCOTTISH SONGS (1776), IS THE MOST LIKE AMERICAN VERSIONS. THE SONG IS ALSO FOUND IN OTHER PARTS OF EUROPE, THE GAELIC, FLEMISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN FORMS PROBABLY DERIVING FROM THE ENGLISH AND THE SCANDINAVIAN AND MAGYAR FROM THE GERMAN.

OTHER BRITISH VERSIONS ARE IN ALFRED WILLIAMS'S FOLK SONGS OF THE UPPER THAMES P. 188, GAVIN GREIG'S LAST LEAVES, NO. 91.

DISCOGRAPHY: THREE NIGHTS EXPERIENCE, EARL  
JOHNSON. OKEH 45092. SEE ALSO AAFS 60

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BARRY-1-315; BELDEN-89; BREWSTER-149;  
CHILD-IX-88; COX-154; DAVIS-485; EDDY-82; HENRY-119; HUDSON-122; LINGCOTT-259; LOMAX-IV-300; MORRIS-317; SCARBOROUGH-11-231; SHARP-1-267; SMITH-159; STOUT-13 OWENS 65.

5

OLD LADY AND THE DEVIL  
BY BILL AND BELLE REED  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15336D (W147211)

MEDIAEVAL WOMAN DEFEATS DEVIL DESPITE HUSBAND'S PRAYERS

THE MOTIF OF A WIFE WHO TERRORIZES DAEMONS IS WIDELY DISTRIBUTED IN EUROPE AND ASIA. CHILD'S TWO VERSIONS (NO. 278) ARE BOTH QUITE SIMILAR TO THE PRESENT RECORDING.

SEE ALSO OTHER BRITISH VERSIONS IN ALFRED WILLIAMS' FOLK SONGS OF THE UPPER THAMES P. 211 AND H.R. HAYWARD'S ULSTER SONGS AND BALLADS P. 32.

DISCOGRAPHY: BATTLE AXE AND THE DEVIL. BILL COX  
AND CLIFF HOBBS. VOCALION 04811. SEE ALSO

HELL AIN'T BUT A MILE AND A QUARTER. ST. LOUIS  
RED MIKE. BLUEBIRD 7744. (FOR A MODERN RECASTING OF THE SAME THEME). SEE ALSO AAFS 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BARRY-1-325; BARRY-11-60; BELDEN-94;  
BREWSTER-155; CHILD-IX-107; COX-164; DAVIS-505; GARDNER-373;  
HENRY-125; HUDSON-124; LINGCOTT-188; LOMAX-IV-152; RANDOLPH-1-189; SHARP-1-275 OWENS-54

6

THE BUTCHERS BOY  
(THE RAILROAD BOY)  
BY BUELL KAZEE  
VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO  
RECORDED IN 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 213A(032)

FATHER FINDS DAUGHTER'S BODY WITH NOTE ATTACHED WHEN  
RAILROAD BOY MISTREATS HER

QUITE FULL NOTES ON THIS BALLAD ARE FOUND IN KETTRIDGE'S NOTES, JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE VOL. XXIX P. 170 AND XXXV P. 361. HE CONSIDERS IT AMALGAMATION OF "THE CRUEL FATHER" AND "THERE IS AN ALEHOUSE IN YONDER TOWN", BOTH 18TH CENTURY BRITISH PRODUCTS. THE WAY IN WHICH THEY ARE COMBINED, HOWEVER, SEEMS TO HAVE OCCURED FIRST IN AMERICA.

THERE ARE BRITISH VERSIONS OF THIS SONG IN GAVIN GREIG'S FOLK SONGS OF THE NORTH EAST, VOL. II NO. 175, GEORGE BUTTERWORTH'S FOLK SONGS FROM SUSSEX NO. 7, LEATHER'S FOLK LORE FROM HEREFORDSHIRE, P. 205, FRANK KIDSON'S TRADITIONAL TUNES P. 44.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-66; BARRY-11-8, 76; BELDEN-201; BREWSTER-198; COX-430; EDDY-129; GARDNER-117; HENRY-195; HUDSON-160; LINSKOTT-179; MORRIS-334; POUND-18; RANDOLPH-1-226; SANDBURG-324; SCARBOROUGH-11-282; SHARP-11-76; STOUT-37

DISCOGRAPHY: THE BUTCHERS BOY. HENRY WHITTER. OKEH 40375. THE BUTCHERS BOY. BLUE SKY BOYS. BLUEBIRD 8482. BUTCHERS BOY. KELLY HARRELL. VICTOR 20242.

# 7

## THE WAGONERS LAD

(Loving Nancy)

BY BUELL KAZEE

VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO.

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 213B(064)

LOCAL GIRL'S PROTEST THAT WHIP NEEDS FIXING FAILS TO HALT WAGONING BOY FRIEND'S DEPARTURE

THIS COMPOSITION ALTHOUGH APPROACHING A BALLAD IN NARRATIVE UNITY IS OF THE TYPE CLASSIFIED BY H.M. BELDEN (SEE BIBLIOGRAPHY) AS FOLK-LYRIC. HE CHARACTERIZES THESE AS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY LOVE SONGS; MOST OFTEN OF LOVE DENIED OR BETRAYED, BUT OCCASIONALLY EXPRESSIONS OF FREEDOM RECOVERED, IN WHICH THE WOMAN (OR THE MAN) SAYS SHE (HE) WILL LOVE WHOM SHE (HE) PLEASURES OR THAT SHE (HE) CARES. ALL ITEMS GIVEN IN THE BIBLIOGRAPHY BELOW CLOSELY RESEMBLE THE PRESENT RECORDING, BUT WORD CLUSTERS AND ENTIRE VERSES OF "THE WAGONERS LAD" ARE FOUND IN A GREAT MANY OTHER SIMILAR AMERICAN AND BRITISH SONGS. IN THIS SET NOS. 57 (THE COO-COO BIRD), 58 (EAST VIRGINIA), 62 (SUGAR BABY), AND 73 (COUNTRY BLUES) CONTAIN VERSES OFTEN USED INTERCHANGEABLY WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH THOSE OF THE PRESENT RECORDING. ALL OF THESE EXAMPLES (PRINCIPALLY FROM KENTUCKY) HAVE 5-STRING BANJO ACCOMPANIMENT WHICH SUGGESTS THAT THIS TYPE OF COMPOSITIONAL COMPOUNDING DEVELOPED BETWEEN 1850-1875.

DISCOGRAPHY: PRETTY POLLY. MC FARLAND AND GARDNER. BRUNSWICK 116. MY HORSES AIN'T HUNGRY. KELLY HARRELL. VICTOR 20103.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: HENRY-279; SCARBOROUGH-11-272; SHARP-11-123; THOMAS-111-30 OWENS-162

# 8

## KING KONG KITCHIE

KITCHIE KI-ME-O

BY "CHUBBY" PARKER AND HIS OLD TIME BANJO

VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO AND WHISTLING.

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15296D(W146878)

ZOOLOGIC MISCEGENY ACHIEVED IN MOUSE FROG NUPTIALS, RELATIVES APPROVE

IN THE REGISTER OF THE LONDON COMPANY OF STATIONERS FOR NOVEMBER 21, 1580, THERE IS AN ENTRY TITLED "A MOSTE STRANGE WEDDINGE OF THE FROGGE AND THE MOUSE"; PROBABLY THIS SAME COMPOSITION. OTHER BRITISH VERSIONS CAN BE FOUND IN ALFRED WILLIAMS' FOLK SONGS OF THE UPPER THAMES, P. 133, JOURNAL OF THE IRISH FOLK LORE SOCIETY, VOL. IV, P. 22, JOURNAL OF THE WELSH FOLK LORE SOCIETY, VOL. I, P. 178, E.M. LEATHER'S FOLK LORE OF HEREFORDSHIRE, P. 209, JOURNAL OF THE FOLK SONG SOCIETY, VOL. II, P. 226.

DISCOGRAPHY: SEE ALSO AAFS 58

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-12; BARRY-11-3; BELDEN-494; BREWSTER-226; COX-470; EDDY-137; GARDNER-455; GORDON-86; HUDSON-282; LINSKOTT-199; LOMAX-11-310; MORRIS-407; PERROW-VOL.26-134; RANDOLPH-1-402; SANDBURG-143; SCARBOROUGH-1-46; SCARBOROUGH-11-244; SHARP-11-312; STOUT-30; TALLEY-190; THOMAS-1-154; WHITE-218 OWENS-254



Eck Dunford

# 9

## OLD SHOES AND LEGGINS

(E. DUNFORD)

BY UNCLE ECK DUNFORD

VOCAL SOLO WITH HARMONICA, VIOLIN, GUITAR, BANJO, AUTOHARP.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-40060B

MOTHER HOSPITABLE, BUT GIRLS FIND SHODDY OLDSTER'S ACTIONS PERVERSE

FOR MORE RECENT BRITISH VERSIONS SEE: GAVIN GREIG'S FOLK SONGS OF THE NORTH EAST VOL. II, NO. 149, ROBERT BELL'S BALLADS AND SONGS OF THE PEASANTRY P. 237, ALFRED WILLIAMS' FOLK SONGS OF THE UPPER THAMES, P. 73, FRANK KIDSON'S TRADITIONAL TUNES, P. 92. SIMILAR FORMS OF THIS SONG ARE FOUND IN THE MUSICAL MISCELLANY, VOL. III, P. 110 (LONDON 1730) AND THE ROBIN (LONDON 1749), THE FORMER, IN SCOTTISH DIALECT HAVING THE BURDEN "AND HIS BEARD NEW SHAV'N".

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-22; BELDEN-264; BREWSTER-255; COX-489; EDDY-132; GARDNER-413; HENRY-301; LOMAX-1V-132; MORRIS-377; PERROW-VOL.28-158; SHARP-11-93; STOUT-30 OWENS-217

# 10

## WILLIE MOORE

BY BURNETT AND RUTHERFORD

VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO AND VIOLIN.

RECORDED IN 1927.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15314D(W145086)

ANNIE UNDER GRASSY MOUND AFTER PARENTS NIX MARRIAGE TO KING. DEATH PROBABLY SELF INFLICTED

THE ONLY PRINTED REFERENCE TO THIS BALLAD SEEMS TO BE IN RANDOLPH. ACCORDING TO HIM, MR. PAUL WILSON, FARMINGTON, ARKANSAS, MET A REV. WILLIAM MOORE IN DALLAS, TEXAS, WHO CLAIMED THAT THE SONG WAS ABOUT HIM. "I SURE DID HAVE SOME MISADVENTURES WHEN I WAS YOUNG" MOORE WAS QUOTED AS SAYING. "I DIDN'T GO TO MONTREAL AND DIE, THOUGH, LIKE THE SONG SAYS" (IN RANDOLPH'S VERSION), "I JUST WENT TO EAST TEXAS AN' TOOK UP PREACHIN' THE WORD".

BIBLIOGRAPHY: RANDOLPH-1V-309

# 11

## A LAZY FARMER BOY

BY BUSTER CARTER AND PRESTON YOUNG

VOCAL SOLO WITH VIOLIN AND GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1930.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15702D(151648)

YOUNG AGRICULTURIST NEGLECTS SEED - LOOSES BOTH CROP AND FIANCEE

KNOWN ALSO AS "THE YOUNG MAN WHO WOULDN'T HOE CORN" OR "HARM LINK" THIS AMERICAN NARRATIVE PROBABLY DATES BACK TO THE MIDDLE 19TH CENTURY.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BELDEN-440; BREWSTER-307; BOTKIN-874; COX-494; EDDY-243; HUDSON-200; LOMAX-V-231; LOMAX-1V-286; POUND-58; RANDOLPH-111-195; SHARP-11-258; STOUT-91 OWENS-219

# 12

**PEG AND AWL**  
 BY CAROLINA TAR HEELS  
 VOCAL DUET WITH HARMONICA, BANJO, GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN 1929.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-40007A

TECHNOLOGICAL UNEMPLOYMENT HITS SHOE INDUSTRY  
 IN THE YEAR OF 18 AND 4

ALTHOUGH RECORDED COMMERCIALY SEVERAL TIMES, THIS  
 EARLY SOCIAL DESCRIPTION IS NOT PRINTED FULLY IN  
 ANY STANDARD SOURCE.  
 THE MEMBERS OF THE "CAROLINA TAR HEELS" ARE DOCK WALSH  
 (BANJO), GWEN FOSTER (HARMONICA), AND THOMAS ASHLEY  
 (GUITAR).

DISCOGRAPHY: PEG AND AWL, KELLY HARRELL, OKEH  
 40544.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: LUNSFORD-30; SHARP-11-75



Whitter and Grayson

# 13

**OMMIE WISE**  
 (G.B. GRAYSON)  
 BY G.B. GRAYSON  
 VOCAL SOLO WITH VIOLIN.  
 RECORDED IN 1927.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21625B(40306)

GREEDY GIRL GOES TO ADAMS SPRING WITH LIAR; LIVES  
 JUST LONG ENOUGH TO REGRET IT

A NAOMI WISE WAS DROWNED BY HER SWEETHEART JONATHAN  
 LEWIS IN DEEP RIVER, 1808 AND HER GRAVE CAN STILL BE  
 SEEN NEARBY AT PROVIDENCE CHURCH, NORTH CAROLINA. THESE  
 ARE PROBABLY THE SAME 'OMIE' AND JOHN LEWIS MENTIONED  
 IN THE BALLAD. THE COMBINATION OF VOICE AND VIOLIN  
 (PLAYED BY THE SINGER) IS QUITE ARCHAIC.

DISCOGRAPHY: NAOMI WISE, CLARENCE ASHLEY, COLUMBIA  
 15522D. SEE ALSO AAFS 57.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BELDEN-322; GORDON-11; HENRY-221;  
 HUDSON-137; LUNSFORD-28; MORRIS-85; RANDOLPH-11-86;  
 SHARP-11-144

# 14

**MY NAME IS JOHN JOHANNA**  
 BY KELLY HARRELL (VIRGINIA STRING BAND)  
 VOCAL SOLO WITH VIOLIN, BANJO, TWO GUITARS.  
 RECORDED IN 1927.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21520A(38235)

DITCH DIGGER SHOCKED BY EMPLOYMENT AGENTS' GROTESQUE  
 DECEPTIONS

A COMPILATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING THIS HUMOROUS  
 COMPOSITION CAN BE FOUND IN MASTERTSON'S TALL TALES OF  
ARKANSAS, PP. 255-268.

DISCOGRAPHY: WAY DOWN IN ARKANSAS, GOLDEN MELODY  
 BOYS, PARAMOUNT 3037. SEE ALSO AAFS 35.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-113; BOTKIN-516; BREWSTER-265;  
 COX-239; LOMAX-V-240; LOMAX-1-283; PERROW-VOL. 26-173;  
 RANDOLPH-111-25; SHARP-11-238; TALLEY-64; THOMAS-1-152  
 OWENS-226

# 15

**BANDIT COLE YOUNGER**  
 (GRAIN)  
 BY EDWARD L. CRAIN (THE TEXAS COWBOY)  
 VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN EARLY 1930.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15710D(W151731)

BANK ROBBER VOICES REGRET FOR ASSOCIATION WITH JAMES  
 BOYS IN NORTHFIELD FIASCO

"COLE YOUNGER WAS A MISSOURIAN WHO RODE WITH QUANTRELL'S  
 GUERRILLAS AND BECAME A CAPTAIN IN SHELBY'S MISSOURI  
 CAVALRY TOWARD THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR. HE AND HIS  
 BROTHERS TURNED OUTLAW, AND ROBBED TRAINS AND BANKS  
 WITH THE JAMES BOYS. CAPTURED WHILE TRYING TO LOOT A  
 BANK IN NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA, IN 1876, COLE WAS SENT  
 TO PRISON FOR MURDER. HE WAS PARDONED IN 1901."  
 RANDOLPH, VOL. 11, P. 12. SEE EMERSON HOUGH'S "THE  
 STORY OF THE OUTLAW" PP. 340-370 FOR FURTHER INFORMA-  
 TION.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: LOMAX - COWBOY SONGS (1925 EDITION)  
 P 106; RANDOLPH-11-12

# 16

**CHARLES GITEAU**  
 BY KELLY HARRELL  
 VOCAL WITH VIRGINIA STRING BAND  
 (VIOLIN, BANJO, GUITAR).  
 RECORDED IN 1927.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 20797B

ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT GARFIELD RECALLS EXPLOIT IN  
 SCAFFOLD PERORATION

JAMES A. GARFIELD, 20TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
 WAS SHOT JULY 2, 1881 IN A WASHINGTON RAILWAY STATION  
 BY A DISAPPOINTED OFFICE SEEKER CHARLES J. GITEAU.  
 ACCORDING TO POUND (AMERICAN BALLADS AND SONGS, 1922,  
 PP 146-251) IT MAY BE AN ADAPTATION OF AN EARLIER  
 SONG "MY NAME IS JOHN T. WILLIAMS". THE SONG IS ALSO  
 ALLEGED TO BE THE WORK OF GITEAU HIMSELF WHO SANG IT  
 TO VISITORS IN HIS DEATH CELL.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BELDEN-412; EDDY-288; HENRY-331;  
 HUDSON-239; MORRIS-72; POUND-20; RANDOLPH-11-29;  
 STOUT-110 OWENS-110

# 17

**JOHN HARDY WAS A DESPERATE  
 LITTLE MAN**  
 (A.P. CARTER)  
 BY THE CARTER FAMILY  
 VOCAL SOLO (BY SARA CARTER) WITH  
 AUTOHARP, GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN 1930.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 40190A

JOHN HARDY HELD WITHOUT BAIL AFTER GUNPLAY. GIRLS IN  
 RED AND BLUE VISIT JAIL. WIFE AT SCAFFOLD

NO ABSOLUTELY AUTHENTIC INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON  
 JOHN HARDY EXCEPT THE ORDER FOR EXECUTION ON FILE IN  
 THE COURT HOUSE AT WELCH, MC DOWELL COUNTY. "STATE OF  
 WEST VIRGINIA VS. JOHN HARDY, FELONY. THIS DAY CAME  
 AGAIN THE STATE BY HER ATTORNEY AND THE PRISONER WHO  
 STANDS CONVICTED OF MURDER IN THE FIRST DEGREE.....  
 THE PRISONER SAYING NOTHING WHY SUCH SENTENCE SHOULD  
 NOT BE PASSED.....IT IS THEREFORE CONSIDERED BY  
 THE COURT THAT THE PRISONER, JOHN HARDY, IS GUILTY  
 .....AND THAT THE SAID JOHN HARDY BE HANGED BY THE  
 NECK UNTIL DEAD....ON FRIDAY THE 19TH DAY OF JANUARY  
 1894." WITNESS OF THE TRIAL STATES THAT HARDY WORKED  
 FOR THE SHAWNEE COAL COMPANY AND ONE PAY DAY NIGHT HE  
 KILLED A MAN IN A CRAP GAME OVER 25 CENTS.(COX)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: COX-175; GORDON-42; JOHNSON-1-55;  
 LOMAX-11-124; LOMAX-V-306; MORRIS-93; RANDOLPH-11-  
 144; SHARP-35

DISCOGRAPHY: JOHN HARDY, BUELL KAZEE, BRUNSWICK  
 144. JOHN HARDY, EVA DAVIS, COLUMBIA 167D. OLD  
JOHN HARDY, CLARENCE ASHLEY, COLUMBIA 1565A.

## Death of John Henry

Featured by Sam Kirk McGee

1. They're out on a trail that John Henry was dead. Could n't hardly stay in  
 2. They took John Henry to that gray yard. They looked at him good and  
 3. John Henry's wife wore a brand new dress. It was all trimmed in  
 4. John Henry told her she could. Lord she cried I  
 5. John Henry told his cap tain. I am a Tennessee  
 6. John Henry ham mered in the moun-tain. Till the ham-mer caught on

led \_\_\_\_\_ Mon-day morning on the East-bound train \_\_\_\_\_ Home-ward John  
 long \_\_\_\_\_ Very last words that his wife-said to him, My husband he is  
 blue \_\_\_\_\_ Very last words she said to him, Henry liv been  
 think \_\_\_\_\_ Who-laps a hammer from the should er, Bound to hear her  
 man \_\_\_\_\_ Be-fore I see that stranger heat me down, Got to have a ham-mer  
 fire \_\_\_\_\_ Very last words I heard him say, "Cool drink of wa-ter

Hen-ry's dead. \_\_\_\_\_ Home-ward John Hen-ry's dead. \_\_\_\_\_  
 dead and gone. \_\_\_\_\_ My husband he is dead and gone. \_\_\_\_\_  
 good to you. \_\_\_\_\_ Henry liv been good to you. \_\_\_\_\_  
 when she rings. \_\_\_\_\_ Bound to hear her when she rings. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in my hands. \_\_\_\_\_ Got to have a hammer in my hand. \_\_\_\_\_  
 "fore I die." \_\_\_\_\_ "Cool drink of wa-ter 'fore I die."

# 19

## STACKALEE

(HUTCHISON)

BY FRANK HUTCHISON

VOCAL SOLO WITH HARMONICA, GUITAR.

RECORDED IN EARLY 1927.

ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 45106 (W80-359A)

### THEFT OF STETSON HAT CAUSES DEADLY DISPUTE. VICTIM IDENTIFIES SELF AS FAMILY MAN

THE MURDER MENTIONED HERE PROBABLY TOOK PLACE IN MEMPHIS IN ABOUT 1900. STACK LEE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN CONNECTED BY BIRTH OR EMPLOYMENT WITH THE LEE FAMILY OF THAT CITY WHO OWNED A LARGE LINE OF STEAMERS ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

DISCOGRAPHY: STACKERLEE. MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURDT. OKEH 8654. STACKOLEE AND BILLY LYONS. FURRY LEWIS. VOCALION 1132.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BOTKIN-122; JOHNSON-11-194; LOMAX-11-93; ODUM-1-196; ODUM-11-245; SCARBOROUGH-1-92



FRANK HUTCHISON  
Endorsement Photo

# 20

## WHITE HOUSE BLUES

BY CHARLIE POOLE WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA RAMBLERS

VOCAL SOLO WITH VIOLIN, BANJO, GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1926.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15099D (W142658)

### MCKINLEY SWEARS, MOURNS, DIES. ROOSEVELT GETS WHITE HOUSE AND SILVER CUP

ON SEPTEMBER 6, 1901, WILLIAM MCKINLEY, 25TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS SHOT AT CLOSE RANGE BY A YOUNG ANARCHIST, LEON CZOLGOSZ. THIS MURDER TOOK PLACE AT A GREAT RECEPTION AT THE PAN-AMERICAN EXPOSITION IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK WHERE THE PRESIDENT HAD GONE TO DECLARE HIS VIEWS ON THE TARIFF.

DISCOGRAPHY: CANNON BALL BLUES. CARTER FAMILY. VICTOR 40317. THE ROAD TO WASHINGTON. ERNEST V. STONEMAN. OKEH 45125. MR. MCKINLEY. HOMER BRIAR-HOPPER. DECCA 5588. SEE ALSO THE BATTLESHIP OF MAINE, RED PATTERSONS PIEDMONT LOG ROLLERS, VICTOR 20936 FOR A RELATED COMPOSITION.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: LOMAX-IV-256

# 18

## GONNA DIE WITH MY HAMMER IN MY HAND

BY WILLIAMSON BROTHERS AND CURRY

VOCAL SOLO WITH DUET CHORUS WITH VIOLIN AND TWO GUITARS.

RECORDED IN 1927.

ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 45127 (W80737)

JOHN HENRY VOWS TO DEFEAT MECHANIZATION; QUESTIONS CAPTAIN, WARNS SHAKER AND SON, WIFE STRONG TOO

GUY B. JOHNSON IN HIS "JOHN HENRY" LISTS THE FOLLOWING (P. 18) AS FACTS: 1. JOHN HENRY REALLY LIVED 2. HE BEAT A STEAM DRILL DOWN AND DIED DOING IT. 3. LI'L BILL WAS HIS BUDDIE OR HELPER 4. HE WORKED FOR A RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR 5. HIS WIFE'S NAME WAS LUCY. THE FOLLOWING ARE PROBABILITIES:

1. HE DIED IN THE EARLY 70'S
2. HE WAS A VIRGINIAN
3. HE WORKED ON THE C & O OR A BRANCH OF THAT SYSTEM
4. HIS CAPTAIN WAS TOMMY WALTERS; PROBABLY AN ASSISTANT FOREMAN. (SEE THE ABOVE REFERENCE FOR MORE COMPLETE DETAILS).

### DISCOGRAPHY:

BILL WILSON. BIRMINGHAM JUG BAND. OKEH 8895. JOHN HENRY BLUES. JOHN CARSON. OKEH 7004. DEATH OF JOHN HENRY. DAVE MACON. VOCALION 15320. JOHN HENRY. HENRY THOMAS. VOCALION 1094. AAFS 15. JOHN HENRY WAS A LITTLE BOY. J. E. MAINER. BLUEBIRD 6629.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BOTKIN-235; COX-194; HENRY-44; JOHNSON-11-180; JOHNSON-1-84; LOMAX-11-3; LOMAX-V-258; LOMAX-IV-258; LUNSFORD-32; MORRIS-182; ODUM-11-221; PERROW-VOL. 26-163; SANDBURG-24; TALLEY-105; WHITE-189

# 21

## FRANKIE

BY MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 8560 (W400221)

### ALBERT DIES PREFERRING ALICE FRY, BUT JUDGE FINDS FRANKIE CHARMING AT LATTER'S TRIAL

ALLEN BRITT SHOT FRANKIE BAKER OF 212 TARGEE STREET, ST. LOUIS MISSOURI, OCTOBER 15, 1899. THE SONG WAS FIRST SUNG BY, AND PROBABLY WRITTEN BY, "MAMMY LOU" A SINGER AT BABE CONNER'S FAMOUS CABARET IN THAT CITY.

DISCOGRAPHY: FRANKIE AND JOHNNY. JIMMY ROGERS. VICTOR 22143. FRANKIES GAMBLIN' MAN. WELBY TOOMEY. GENET 3195. FRANKIE DEAN. TOM DARBY AND JIMMY TARLTON. COLUMBIA 15701D. FRANKIE. DYKES MAGIC CITY TRIO. BRUNSWICK 127.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BELDEN-330; EDDY-245; GORDON-46; HENRY-338; HUDSON-189; LOMAX-11-103; LOMAX-111-192; LOMAX-V-312; MORRIS-126; ODUM-1-228; PERROW-VOL. 28-178; RANDOLPH-11-125; SANDBURG-76; SCARBOROUGH-80; WHITE-213

22

**WHEN THAT GREAT SHIP  
WENT DOWN**  
BY WILLIAM AND VERSEY SMITH  
VOCAL DUET WITH TAMBOURINE, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 125058(4685-728)

MANUFACTURERS PROUD DREAM DESTROYED AT SHIPWRECK.  
SEGREGATED POOR DIE FIRST

AT 2:20 A.M. APRIL 15TH, 1912 THE WHITE STAR LINER  
TITANIC THE LARGEST SHIP AFLOAT, ON HER MAIDEN VOYAGE,  
STRUCK AN ICEBERG AT FULL SPEED, GOING DOWN WITH  
1513 PERSONS. SEE BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS NO.  
2253, SHIPPING CASUALTIES (TITANIC) 1912 [ED. 6352]  
FOR DETAILS.

DISCOGRAPHY: THE TITANIC. ERNEST V. STONEMAN. OKEH  
40288. SEE ALSO (SINKING OF) THE TITANIC BY RICHARD  
"RABBIT" BROWN (VICTOR) AND GOD MOVES ON THE WATER  
BY BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON (COLUMBIA) FOR DIFFERENT  
BALLADS OF THE SAME THEME.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: HENRY-426; JACKSON-11-210; RANDOLPH-IV-  
145; WHITE-347



CARTER FAMILY



Furry Lewis

23

**ENGINE ONE-FORTY-THREE**  
(A.P. CARTER)  
BY THE CARTER FAMILY  
VOCAL SOLO (BY SARA CARTER) WITH  
AUTOHARP, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 400898

GEORGIE RUNS INTO ROCK AFTER MOTHER'S WARNING. DIES  
WITH THE ENGINE HE LOVES

GEORGE ALLEY WAS BORN IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, JULY 10TH,  
1860; MARRIED NOVEMBER 10TH, 1881, AND HAD FOUR CHILDREN.  
THE WRECK ON THE C & O IN WHICH HE WAS KILLED OCCURRED  
AT 5:40 A.M. OCTOBER 23RD, 1890, WHILE HE WAS RUNNING  
TRAIN NO. 4, THE F.F.V. ("FAST FLYING VESTIBULE"),  
ENGINE 134. HE LIVED FIVE HOURS AFTER BEING HURT. THE  
WRECK OCCURED THREE MILES EAST OF HINTON, AND WAS  
CAUSED BY A LANDSLIDE. THE BALLAD WAS PROBABLY COMPOSED  
BY A WORKER IN THE ROUND HOUSE AT HINTON, WEST VIRGINIA.  
(cox)

DISCOGRAPHY: WRECK ON THE C & O ROAD. BRADLEY  
KINCAID. CHAMPION 54098. THE C. AND O. WRECK. GEORGE RENEAU,  
VOCALION 14897.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: COX-221; LOMAX-11-31; MORRIS-111;  
RANDOLPH-IV-129; THOMAS-11-115

24

**KASSIE JONES (TWO PARTS)**  
(F. LEWIS)  
BY FURRY LEWIS  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21664A&B

CRACK ENGINEER JONES IN FATAL COLLISION. KNEW ALICE  
FRY. WIFE RECALLS SYMBOLIC DREAM, LATER CONSOLES  
CHILDREN

JOHN LUTHER JONES (KNOWN AS "CASEY" FROM THE TOWN  
OF CAYCE, KENTUCKY, NEAR WHERE HE WAS BORN) WAS  
KILLED A LITTLE AFTER 4 A.M., APRIL 30TH, 1900  
WHEN THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL'S NO. 638 PLOUGHED INTO A  
FREIGHT TRAIN THAT EXTENDED INTO THE MAIN LINE  
FROM A SIDE TRACK NEAR VAUGHN, MISSISSIPPI. WHEN  
THEY TOOK CASEY'S BODY FROM THE OVERTURNED CAB, THEY  
FOUND ONE HAND ON THE WHISTLE CORD AND THE OTHER  
ON THE AIRBRAKE LEVER. ACCORDING TO HIS WIDOW,  
CASEY ESTABLISHED A TRADEMARK FOR HIMSELF BY HIS  
INIMITABLE METHOD OF BLOWING THE WHISTLE IN A KIND  
OF LONG DRAWN OUT NOTE, BEGINNING SOFTLY, THEN RIS-  
ING, THEN DYING AWAY ALMOST TO A WHISPER. PEOPLE  
LIVING ALONG THE RIGHT OF WAY WOULD TURN OVER IN  
THEIR BEDS LATE AT NIGHT AND SAY "THERE GOES CASEY  
JONES". "I REMEMBER", SAYS SIM WEBB, CASEY'S ENGIN-  
EER, "THAT AS I JUMPED FROM THE CAB CASEY HELD  
DOWN THE WHISTLE IN A LONG, PIERCING SCREAM". THE  
BALLAD WAS WRITTEN A FEW DAYS AFTER THE WRECK BY  
WALLACE SAUNDERS AN ENGINE WIPER OF MEMPHIS, MISS-  
ISSIPPI, WHO HAD BEEN A CLOSE FRIEND OF JONES.  
(SEE ERIE RAILROAD MAGAZINE, APRIL 1928 AND APRIL,  
1932.

DISCOGRAPHY: CASEY JONES. JOHN CARSON. OKEH 40038.  
ON THE ROAD AGAIN. MEMPHIS JUG BAND. VICTOR 38015.  
SOUTHERN CASEY JONES. JESSE JAMES. DECCA 7213.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BOTKIN-241; HUDSON-214; JOHNSON-11-182;  
LOMAX-11-34; LOMAX-V-264; MORRIS-109; ODUM-1-207; ODUM-11-  
126; PERROW-VOL.26-165; POUND-56; SANDBURG-366; SCARBOROUGH-  
1-249; WHITE-374

25

**DOWN ON PENNYS FARM**  
BY THE BENTLY BOYS  
VOCAL SOLO WITH BANJO, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15565D(W149254)

RENTERS CAUGHT BY POVERTY ON GEORGE PENNY'S FARM  
PICTURE LANDLORD AS MISER, THIEF, AND LIAR

THIS RECORDING IS A REGIONALIZED RECASTING OF AN  
EARLIER SONG "HARD TIMES". A TRANSCRIPTION OF THE  
"BENTLY BOYS" VERSION IS FOUND IN LOMAX -IV, P. 287.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: GARDNER-443; HUDSON-215; LOMAX-11-332;  
LOMAX-IV-287

26

**MISSISSIPPI BOWEAVIL  
BLUES**  
BY THE MASKED MARVEL  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 128058(15211, P1337)

BOLLWEAVIL SURVIVES PHYSICAL ATTACK AFTER CLEVERLY  
ANSWERING FARMERS QUESTIONS

A TEXT SIMILAR TO THIS RECORDING DOES NOT SEEM TO  
HAVE BEEN PRINTED IN ANY EASILY AVAILABLE SOURCE.  
ALL OF THE REFERENCES GIVEN BELOW REFER TO A COMPO-  
SITION CONTAINING A NUMBER OF PHRASES AND RHYMES  
IN COMMON WITH THIS VERSION, BUT IN A TOTALLY DIFFER-  
ENT METRICAL PATTERN.

DISCOGRAPHY: AAFS 16.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BOTKIN-916; HANDY-3; HUDSON-199; LOMAX-11-  
112; LOMAX-111-184; LOMAX-V-236; MORRIS-188; SANDBURG-8-  
252; SCARBOROUGH-1-77; WHITE-352



Carolina Tar Heels

27

**GOT THE FARM LAND BLUES**  
BY THE CAROLINA TAR HEELS  
VOCAL SOLO WITH HARMONICA, BANJO, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1932.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 23611A

DISCOURAGING ACTS OF GOD AND MAN CONVINCING FARMER  
OF POSITIVE BENEFITS IN URBAN LIFE

NO STANDARD PRINTED SOURCE GIVES ANY OF THE VERSES  
OF THIS RECORDING, BUT NUMEROUS ONES OF SIMILAR  
MEANING AND STYLE CAN BE FOUND IN THE WORKS OF  
JOHN AND ALAN LOMAX.

28

**SAIL AWAY LADY**  
(FIDDLE SOLO) MOUNTAIN DANCE MUSIC  
BY "UNCLE BUNT" STEPHENS  
UNACCOMPANIED VIOLIN SOLO.  
RECORDED IN 1926.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15071D(W141876)

THIS PERFORMANCE IS PROBABLY SIMILAR TO MUCH  
AMERICAN DANCE MUSIC IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE  
REVOLUTIONARY AND CIVIL WARS. ALTHOUGH, BY THE  
17TH CENTURY THE BANJO HAD BEEN INTRODUCED TO  
THIS CONTINENT FROM WEST AFRICA, THE EUROPEAN  
SETTLERS GENERALLY USED THE VIOLIN UNACCOMPANIED  
FOR DANCING, AND SANG UNACCOMPANIED OR WITH A  
VIOLIN ONLY (SEE NO. 13 OF THIS SET). INCREASED  
SOCIAL CONTACTS OF VARIOUS KINDS DURING THE MIDDLE  
19TH CENTURY POPULARIZED THE VIOLIN-BANJO COMBINA-  
TION. (SEE NO. 82 THIS SET). AN UNUSUAL SET OF  
WORDS FOR THIS MELODY CAN BE FOUND IN TALLY, P. 20.  
THE TUNE ITSELF IS IN ALMOST EVERY COLLECTION OF  
'FIDDLE' MUSIC.

DISCOGRAPHY: SAIL AWAY LADY, UNCLE DAVE MAGON.  
VOCALION 5155.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: FORD-35

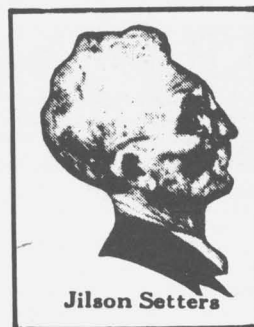
29

**THE WILD WAGONER**  
(FROLIC TUNE)  
BY J.W. DAY (JILSON SETTERS)  
VIOLIN SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN EARLY 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21353A(42485)

THE USE OF THE GUITAR BECAME WIDESPREAD IN THIS COUNTRY  
ABOUT 1900; PROBABLY THE RESULT OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE  
DURING THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR. IT IS NOTICEABLE IN  
THIS RECORDING (AND MOST PERFORMANCES OF VIOLIN AND  
GUITAR) THAT MORE EXTREME VARIATIONS IN THE ACCENTING  
AND RHYTHM OF THE ORIGINAL THEME OCCUR THAN TAKE PLACE  
IN VIOLIN-BANJO COMBINATIONS OR UNACCOMPANIED VIOLIN  
PERFORMANCES. "WAGONER" CAN BE LOCATED IN ANY STANDARD  
VOLUME OF AMERICAN COUNTRY DANCE TUNES. THE BIOGRAPHY  
OF JILSON SETTERS, A BLIND KENTUCKIAN WHO, HIS SIGHT  
RESTORED, WENT TO ENGLAND AND PLAYED FOR GEORGE THE  
FIFTH, IS FOUND IN "THE SINGIN' FIDDLER OF LOST HOPE  
HOLLOW" BY JEAN THOMAS (DUTTON, 1938).

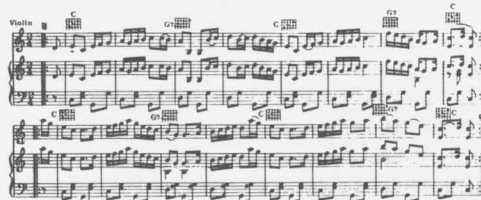
DISCOGRAPHY: GEORGIA WAGNER, FIDDLIN JOHN CARSON. OKEH  
45040. WAGGONER, UNCLE "AM" STUART. VOCALION 14840.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: FORD-28



Jilson Setters

WAGONER



30

**WAKE UP JACOB**  
BY PRINCE ALBERT HUNT'S TEXAS RAMBLERS  
VIOLIN WITH TWO GUITARS.  
RECORDED IN DALLAS TEXAS, 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 45375(402730)

AN EVEN MORE ELABORATE COMPLEX OF ACCENT VARIATIONS  
OCCUR IN THIS TEXAS VIOLIN-GUITAR PERFORMANCE THAN  
TOOK PLACE WITH SIMILAR INSTRUMENTATION IN NO. 29.  
RELATIVE FREEDOM WITH THE MELODY TOOK PLACE EARLIER  
IN TEXAS AND LOUISIANA THAN IN THE MORE NORTHERN  
STATES, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF A GREATER DIVERSIFICATION  
OF CULTURES ALONG THE GULF COAST. A SMALL LOCAL AREA  
OF A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR STYLE (OF WHICH THE RECORDINGS  
BY "UNCLE JIMMY" THOMPSON (COLUMBIA 1928) ARE EXCELLENT  
EXAMPLES) DEVELOPED QUITE EARLY IN TENNESSEE. THE WELL  
KNOWN TUNE GIVEN HERE IS SOMETIMES KNOWN AS "WILD  
HORSE" PARTICULARLY IN NORTH CAROLINA, KENTUCKY AND  
OTHER CENTRAL EASTERN STATES.

DISCOGRAPHY: WILD HORSE, NORTH CAROLINA RAMBLERS.  
COLUMBIA 15279D. THE WILD HORSE OF STONEY POINT.  
JILSON SETTERS. VICTOR 40025.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: FORD-35

31

**LA DANSEUSE - FOX TROT**  
(THE DANCER)  
BY DELMA LACHNEY AND BLIND UNCLE GASPARD  
VIOLIN WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION 5303

THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THIS ARCADIAN VIOLIN-GUITAR  
COMBINATION IS IMMEDIATELY NOTICEABLE, FOR NOT ONLY  
IS THE MELODY ITSELF OF A TYPE RATHER FOREIGN TO THE  
ANGLO-AMERICAN PATTERN, BUT THE STEADY AND REGULAR  
UNISON RHYTHM (AS OPPOSED TO THE SLIGHTLY CONTRA-  
PUNTAL RELATIONSHIPS ON NOS. 29 AND 30) IS VERY TYPICAL  
OF LOUISIANA. TAYLOR GRIGG'S LOUISIANA MELODY  
MAKERS (VICTOR 1928-1930) WERE A CONTEMPORARY STRING  
GROUP WITH A HIGHLY PERFECTED RHYTHM OF THIS SORT,  
AND VERY PURE EXAMPLES CAN BE FOUND AMONG RECORDINGS  
MADE IN NEW ORLEANS WITHIN THE LAST TEN YEARS. THE  
DISTINCTIVE REGIONAL PLAYING OF THE TEXAS AND OKLA-  
HOMA STRING BANDS (LIGHT CRUST DOUGH BOYS - BOB WILLS,  
BILL BOYD, JIMMY REVAR, ETC.) DURING THE DEPRESSION  
AND UNTIL WORLD WAR II, DEVELOPED AS AN OFF-SHOOT  
FROM LOUISIANA ABOUT 1920, POSSIBLY WHEN OIL WORKERS  
FROM THERE WENT TO TEXAS.

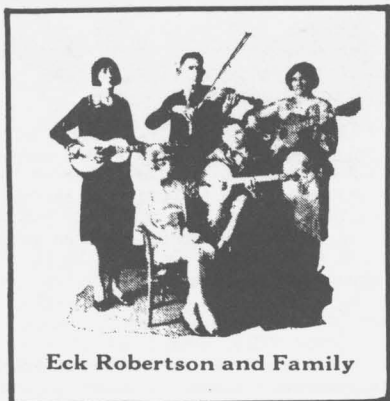


32

**GEORGIA STOMP**  
(JIM BAXTER)  
BY ANDREW AND JIM BAXTER  
VIOLIN AND GUITAR WITH TALKING.  
RECORDED IN EARLY 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-38002B

THIS PERFORMANCE IS STRUCTURALLY INTERMEDIATE BETWEEN THE EARLY RURAL DANCE STYLE AND THE SYNCOPATED URBAN STYLE THAT WAS PERFECTED ABOUT 1880, TOWARD THE END OF THE RECORDING THE LOUISIANA REGIONAL MELODY USUALLY CALLED "MAMMA'S BABY BOY", "PORK CHOPS RAG", "GATEMOUTH" OR "GET IT RIGHT", IS INTERPOLATED.

DISCOGRAPHY: SEE ALSO ST. LOUIS TICKLE. HUMPHRIES BOTHERS, Okeh 45464 FOR A SIMILAR COMPOSITION.



Eck Robertson and Family

33

**BRILLIANCY MEDLEY**  
(A.C. ROBERTSON)  
BY ECK ROBERTSON AND FAMILY  
VIOLIN WITH TWO GUITARS, BANJO.  
RECORDED IN 1930.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 40298A

"ECK" ROBERTSON WAS ONE OF THE PIONEER RURAL RECORDING ARTISTS, WITH UNACCOMPANIED SOLOS ISSUED BY VICTOR THIRTY YEARS AGO. HIS PLAYING IN THE PRESENT RECORDING IS QUITE ARCHAIC IN ITS STUDIED AND EXALTANT FORMALITY, BUT THE MEDLEY OF TRADITIONAL TUNES IS MORE SUITED TO THE POPULAR DANCE STEPS OF THE 1920'S THAN FOR THE SQUARE DANCE.

34

**INDIAN WAR WHOOP**  
(COUNTRY DANCE) (F. MING)  
BY FLOYD MING AND HIS PEP-STEPPERS  
VIOLIN WITH TWO GUITARS, AUTOHARP,  
STAMPING AND VOCAL SOUNDS.  
RECORDED IN 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21294A(41896)

THE EFFECT OF PRE-COLUMBIAN AMERICA ON CONTEMPORARY MUSIC HAS BEEN CHIEFLY TO ACT AS A CATALYST BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN MUSICAL ELEMENTS. IT IS DOUBTFUL IF THIS RECORDING BEARS MUCH REAL RELATION TO INDIAN MUSIC; IT IS, RATHER, ROMANTICISM AKIN TO THAT OF 'WESTERN' MOVIES. THE PEP-STEPPERS DRUMMING OFF FEET IS A TYPE OF PERFORMANCE SELDOM HEARD OUTSIDE OF RELIGIOUS MUSIC.

35

**OLD COUNTRY STOMP**  
(THOMAS)  
BY HENRY THOMAS "RAGTIME TEXAS"  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR AND WHISTLE.  
RECORDED IN CHICAGO ILL. 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION 1230

TAKE PARTNERS, PROMENADE, GOING BACK TO BALTIMORE, MISTREATED WITH KNIFE AND FORK, GOOD BYE, FARE YOU WELL, THAT'S ALL RIGHT, CALL THE LAW, COME GO WITH ME TRADITIONAL TUNE, WITH SQUARE DANCE CALLS IN THE FIRST PART OF THE RECORDING REPLACED LATER BY FOLK-LYRIC WORD CLUSTERS (SEE NOTE FOR NO.7 OF THIS SET). COMPOSING A VERSE BY REPEATING THE SAME PHRASE SEVERAL TIMES, PRECEDED THE STILL POPULAR TECHNIQUE OF SINGING ONE LINE TWICE, FOLLOWED BY A DIFFERENT PHRASE OF THE SAME LENGTH AND RHYME AS THE FIRST TWO. THIS LATER DEVICE WAS POPULARIZED AROUND 1900.

36

**OLD DOG BLUE**  
(JIM JACKSON)  
BY JIM JACKSON  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN EARLY 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 213873(41827)

GOING BACK WHERE COME FROM, WIFE DIED, LEFT BOUNTY, BLUE - TRUE, TREED POSSUM (IN/ON LOG, LIMB, NOAH'S ARK) HERE, RING, HERE, WHO HERE SINCE I GONE? GIRL WITH RED DRESS

DANCE TUNE WITH ORIGINAL WORDS REPLACED BY NARRATIVE LYRICS. VESTIGES OF THE EARLIER SONG CAN BE HEARD IN THE LINES BEGINNING "WHO'S BEEN HERE SINCE I BEEN GONE".

BIBLIOGRAPHY: HUDSON-201; LOMAX-V-36; LOMAX-IV-111; PERROW-VOL.26-128; RANDOLPH-11-36; WHITE-207

37

**SAUT CRAPAUD - FOX TROT**  
(JUMP, FROG)  
BY COLUMBUS FRUGE  
VOCAL SOLO WITH ACCORDION. (CAJUN DIALECT)  
RECORDED IN LATE 1920.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 22184A

POSSIBLY THE MOST WIDELY KNOWN OF ANY ARCADIAN DANCE TUNE, FOR FULL NOTES SEE WHITFIELD'S "LOUISIANA FRENCH FOLK SONGS".

BIBLIOGRAPHY: WHITFIELD-101

38

**ARCADIAN ONE STEP**  
BY JOSEPH FALCON  
VOCAL SOLO WITH ACCORDION, GUITAR, TRIANGLE.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 40513F(4110557)

THE ACCORDION, ONE OF THE MOST BASIC ARCADIAN INSTRUMENTS, IS SELDOM HEARD IN THE STATES NORTH OF LOUISIANA. THE CHARACTERISTIC RAPID RUNS IN THE MELODY ARE ALSO HEARD IN THE VOCAL OF NO. 39 OF THIS SET.

39

**HOME SWEET HOME**  
BY BREAUX FRERES (CLIFFORD, OPHY, AMEDEE)  
VOCAL SOLO WITH VIOLIN, ACCORDION, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1933.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION 02961B(3A1173)

A WELL KNOWN POPULAR SONG IS HERE PLAYED IN WALTZ TIME, A DANCE OF MUCH GREATER IMPORTANCE TO THE FRENCH SPEAKING THAN TO THE ENGLISH SPEAKING RURAL POPULATION. THE FREEDOM WITH WHICH THE MELODY IS TREATED, PARTICULARLY IN INCORPORATING LONG DOWNWARD RUNS, IS ALSO VERY TYPICAL OF LOUISIANA.

40

NEWPORT BLUES  
(BOB COLEMAN)  
BY CINCINNATI JUG BAND  
HARMONICA, JUG, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 12743A(21100-2)

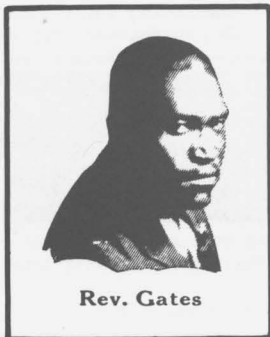
BLOWING ACROSS A SMALL OPENING IN A CLOSED VESSEL TO PRODUCE MUSICAL SOUND IS WIDELY USED IN NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA, THE WEST INDIES, AND AFRICA. THE MELODIC LINE PLAYED ON THE JUG IN THIS RECORDING SEEMS TO REPRESENT AN EARLIER AND MORE INLAND STYLE THAN THE EVENLY SPACED BASS CHORDS HEARD ON RECORDINGS MADE IN MEMPHIS. (SEE NOS. 59, 66, 72, AND 81 OF THIS SET)

41

MOONSHINERS DANCE (PART 1)  
(CLOUTIER)  
BY FRANK CLOUTIER AND VICTORIA CAFE ORCHESTRA  
(OLD TIME DANCE ORCHESTRA 1-28)  
BANJO, PIANO, CLARINET, TUBA, HARMONICA,  
TRUMPET, DRUMS, WITH TALKING.  
RECORDED IN 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE GENNETT 6305A

ONE OF THE MUSICAL ANCESTORS OF SPIKE JONES. THE JAZZ PHRASING OF "WHEN YOU WORE A TULIP" IS AS SURPRISING AS THE INCORPORATION, EARLIER IN THE DANCE, OF THE HYMN TUNE "AT THE CROSS".

DISCOGRAPHY: OVER THE WAVES. JIMMY WILSONS CATFISH STRING BAND. OKEH 45029.



Rev. Gates

42

MUST BE BORN AGAIN  
(GATES)  
BY REV. J.M. GATES  
VOCAL GROUP UNACCOMPANIED.  
RECORDED IN LATE 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 35789A(END OF RECORD ONLY)

43

OH DEATH WHERE IS THY STING  
BY REV. J.M. GATES  
VOCAL GROUP UNACCOMPANIED  
RECORDED IN LATE 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 35789B(END OF RECORD ONLY)

"LINING HYMNS", IN WHICH THE LEADER CHANTS A PHRASE, OFTEN FROM THE BIBLE, AND THE CHOIR RESPONDS WITH THE SAME LINE, SINGING ONE SYLLABLE TO EACH NOTE OF CERTAIN VERY SLOW TUNES, ARE BELIEVED TO BE ONE OF THE EARLIEST MODES OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS SINGING IN THIS COUNTRY. EXAMPLES OF MUSIC, AND A DESCRIPTION WRITTEN BY A SOUTHERNER, CAN BE FOUND IN GEORGE PULLEN JACKSON'S WHITE AND NEGRO SPIRITUALS.

44

ROCKY ROAD  
BY ALABAMA SACRED HARP SINGERS  
VOCAL GROUP WITH REED ORGAN  
RECORDED IN BIRMINGHAM ALABAMA, 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15274D(W146091)

FATHER, MOTHER, ALMOST DONE TRAVELING MIGHTY ROCKY ROAD; GO WHERE JESUS IS.

ANOTHER METHOD OF CHORAL SINGING USED VERY EARLY IN THIS COUNTRY. THE POSITION ON THE SCALE OF EACH NOTE IN THE MELODY IS FIRST SUNG, FOLLOWED BY THE WORDS FROM SONG BOOKS (IN THIS CASE THE SACRED HARP) HAVING THE NOTES PRINTED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT SHAPES TO MAKE IDENTIFICATION EASIER. EVEN AT THE PRESENT TIME SOME OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY SUNG TUNES ARE ONES WRITTEN DURING AND BEFORE THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: JACKSON-11-170; PERKINS-247;  
WHITE-112

45

PRESENT JOYS  
BY ALABAMA SACRED HARP SINGERS  
VOCAL GROUP WITH REED ORGAN  
RECORDED IN BIRMINGHAM ALABAMA, 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15274D(W146092)

PRaise LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. PRESENT JOYS PASSING FAST. HEAVEN AT LAST

GROUPS LED BY MEMBERS OF THE DENSON FAMILY SINGING FROM THE SACRED HARP IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, HAVE RECORDED MOST OF THE LIMITED NUMBER OF 'SHAPE NOTE' SONGS THAT HAVE BEEN COMMERCIALY ISSUED. IN ADDITION TO NOS. 44 AND 45 OF THIS SET, THEY RECORDED FOUR SIDES FOR COLUMBIA IN 1928, FOUR FOR BRUNSWICK IN 1930, AND TWELVE SIDES FOR BLUEBIRD IN 1934. OTHER GOOD GROUPS ARE DANIELS-DEASON SACRED HARP (COLUMBIA 1928), C. BUTTS SACRED HARP (OKEH 1928), FA SOL LA SINGERS (COLUMBIA 1931), MIDDLE GEORGIA SINGING CONVENTION (OKEH 1931), ROSWELL SACRED HARP (BLUEBIRD 939). ALBUM NO. 1 OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AAFS SERIES CONTAINS A LARGE AND VARIED COLLECTION MADE IN 1942. THE TYPE OF PERFORMANCE ON THIS RECORD IS USUALLY KNOWN AS A 'FUGUING TUNE'.

46

THIS SONG OF LOVE  
BY MIDDLE GEORGIA SINGING CONVENTION No. 1  
VOCAL GROUP UNACCOMPANIED.  
RECORDED IN 1932.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 8903(W404656)

HOME TO HEAVEN. LAND WHERE NO NIGHT. SINS FORGIVEN. WALKING ON HIGHER WAY. LIGHT OF HEAVEN SURROUNDS. SONG OF LOVE IN HEART. BELLS RINGING, HOSANNAS SINGING.

THE WORDS OF THIS SONG PROBABLY DATE FROM THE 1920'S, BUT THE PRECISE METHOD OF PERFORMANCE QUITE LIKELY PRECEDED THE 'LOOSER' STYLE HEARD IN NOS. 44 AND 45 OF THIS SET.

47

JUDGEMENT  
BY REV. SISTER MARY NELSON  
VOCAL TRIO UNACCOMPANIED  
RECORDED IN CHICAGO, ILL. 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION B1109(86)

JUDGEMENT MORNING. GOD, JESUS, COMING UNAWARES. CLOUD BEARS HORSES. GET MORNING GARMENTS. STAFF IN HAND. GAMBLER, LIAR, DRUNKARD, ADULTEROUS, HYPOCRITE, PRETEND US, WASTE TIME. JUDGE YOUNG AND OLD. BETTER GET READY FOR JUDGEMENT.

UNACCOMPANIED RELIGIOUS VERSE-SONG WITH CHORUS FOLLOWED BY LINES SELECTED FROM THE GENERAL STOCK OF RELIGIOUS PHRASES. EXAMPLES OF SIMILAR TRADITIONAL LINES AND COMPOSITIONS CAN BE FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF JOHNSON (11), LOMAX, ODUM AND JOHNSON, AND WHITE.

48

HE GOT BETTER THINGS  
FOR YOU  
(T. ROBERTS)  
BY MEMPHIS SANCTIFIED SINGERS  
VOCAL DUET WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN MEMPHIS TENN., OCT. 3, 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 38559B

HALF AIN'T NEVER BEEN TOLD. JESUS CHRIST SAVIOR; GOT  
HOLY GHOST AND FIRE. CORNELIUS HUMBLE, NOT SUFFICIENT,  
GOD SENT ANGEL. SAINT MARY, VIRGIN, BIRTHED SON OF  
GOD. GOD MADE HER NEW; NOW WAITING IN GLORY.

RELIGIOUS SONG SIMILAR TO, BUT WITH VERSE PHRASES OF  
LATER TYPE THAN, THOSE HEARD ON NO. 47 OF THIS SET.  
THE HIGHLY DEVELOPED VOCAL VIBRATO ON THIS RECORDING  
IS TYPICAL OF MEMPHIS.

49

SINCE I LAID MY  
BURDEN DOWN  
BY ELDERS MCINTORSH AND EDWARDS (ASSISTED  
BY SISTERS JOHNSON AND TAYLOR) SANCTIFIED  
SINGERS  
VOCAL QUARTET WITH GUITARS, TAMBORINE  
AND CLAPPING.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 8698 (#402160)

GLORY, HALLELUJAH, SINCE I LAID MY BURDEN DOWN.  
SICKNESS, TROUBLE WILL BE OVER WHEN I LAY MY BURDEN  
DOWN.

AT LEAST ONE OF THE VOCALISTS HERE SEEMS TO BE THE  
SAME AS ON NO. 48 OF THIS SET; PROBABLY MARY JOHNSON.  
"ELDER" MCINTORSH IS MOST LIKELY LONNIE MCINTORSH WHO  
RECORDED FOR VICTOR IN 1928. THE SONG IS OF A POPULAR  
TYPE, HAVING FOUR SHORT LINES IN EACH VERSE WITH NOS.  
1 AND 3 THE SAME IN ANY ONE VERSE, BUT CHANGING BE-  
TWEEN VERSES.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ODUM-11-200

50

JOHN THE BAPTIST  
BY REV. MOSES MASON  
[SINGING SERMON] VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN EARLY 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 12702A(20290-2)

JOHN SAW NUMBER IN AIR. VOICE CRYING IN WILDERNESS;  
HOLY. JESUS BAPTIZED. HOW LONG MY LORD? JESUS FASTS,  
TEMPTERS COME. "GET THEE BEHIND ME"

CHANTED, NON-RHYMING, INTERLUDES BETWEEN THE VOCAL  
SECTIONS ARE, AS IN THE PRESENT PERFORMANCE, ALMOST  
ALWAYS USED WITH THIS SONG. (SEE BIBLIOGRAPHY)

DISCOGRAPHY: JOHN SAID HE SAW A NUMBER. ARIZONA  
DRANES. OKEH 8352.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: LOMAX-IV-16; PERKINS-241

51

DRY BONES  
BY BASCOM LAMAR LUNSFORD  
"THE MINSTREL OF THE APPALACHIANS"  
VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 314(140)

ENOCH, 365, TO HEAVEN ALIVE. PAUL PRAYED; PRISON WALLS  
DOWN. MOSES SAW BURNING BUSH; LORD SPOKE. BONES WALK,  
DEAF HEAR, DUMB TALK. EVE, UNDER SYCAMORE TREE SAYS  
"SATAN TEMPTING ME." LIGHT, FROM HEAVEN (SHINING ALL  
AROUND) COME DOWN

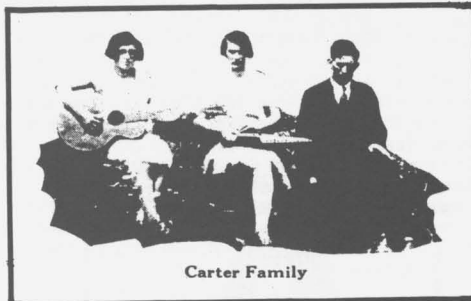
THE BANJO IN RELIGIOUS MUSIC IS LATER THAN IN ITS USE  
WITH DANCE TUNES; AND HERE, AS IN MANY SIMILAR SONGS,  
THE MELODY IS PROBABLY OF SECULAR ORIGIN.

52

JOHN THE REVELATOR  
BY BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON  
VOCAL DUET WITH TWO GUITARS.  
RECORDED IN 1930.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 14530D(#150316)

WHO'S WRITING? JOHN REVELATOR. WHAT'S JOHN WRITING?  
ABOUT REVELATIONS. DAUGHTER OF ZION - JUDEA'S LION.  
MOSES TO MOSES. GOD REDEEM. BOUGHT US WITH BLOOD.  
MOSES SAW BUSH; BOOK OF SEVEN SEALS

NO INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ON WILLIE JOHNSON, ONE  
OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL OF ALL RELIGIOUS SINGERS.  
MOST OF THE THIRTY-OR-SO SIDES HE RECORDED FOR  
COLUMBIA WERE MADE IN NEW ORLEANS, SO THAT CITY MAY  
HAVE BEEN HIS HOME. THE RECORDING GIVEN HERE, WITH  
ALTERNATE LINES IN THE CHORUS BY A DIFFERENT SINGER,  
IS TYPICAL OF HIS 'MIDDLE PERIOD' RECORDINGS. MANY  
OF THE TUNES HE FIRST RECORDED IN THE 1920'S WERE  
LATER RECORDED DURING THE 1930'S BY THE CARTER FAMILY,  
BLUE SKY BOYS, CARLISLE BROTHERS AND SIMILAR GROUPS.



Carter Family

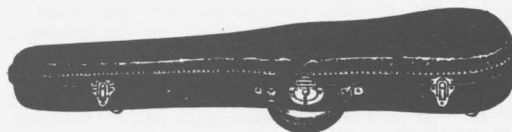
53

LITTLE MOSES  
(A.P. CARTER)  
BY THE CARTER FAMILY  
VOCAL TRIO WITH AUTOHARP, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1932.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 23641B

PHARO'S DAUGHTER OPENED ARK, SENT FOR NURSE. INFANT  
SAD, THEN GLAD, CARRIED TO MOTHER; BY SEA RED,  
LIFTED ROD, JEWS CROSS, HOST LOST. ON MOUNTAIN  
HIGH, LABORS CEASE, DEPART IN PEACE

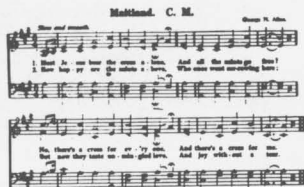
ACCORDING TO SARA CARTER, SHE AND HER FORMER HUSBAND,  
ALONZO PLEASANT, AND COUSIN MAYBELLE, MADE  
OVER 300 SIDES FOR VARIOUS COMPANIES. THEIR 1927  
RECORDS MADE BY VICTOR IN MACES SPRINGS, VIRGINIA,  
ARE AMONG THE VERY FIRST ELECTRICAL RECORDINGS. US-  
ING AUTOHARP CHORDS, PLAYED BY SARA, (WHO USUALLY  
LEADS THE SINGING) AND A GUITAR MELODIC LINE (MAYBELLE),  
THEIR INSTANTLY RECOGNIZABLE RHYTHM HAS INFLUENCED  
EVERY FOLK MUSICIAN FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BELDEN-449; RANDOLPH-IV-97;  
- ALSO G.P. JACKSON, SPIRITUAL FOLKSONGS  
OF EARLY AMERICA P 55-56





Ernest Phipps



1 The glorified cross 'Til hour,  
The church shall see the cross,  
And then go home my arms to wear,  
For there's a cross for me.

2 Oh, garden cross! Oh, garden cross!  
Oh, garden cross! Oh, garden cross!  
Oh, garden cross! Oh, garden cross!  
Oh, garden cross! Oh, garden cross!

54

**SHINE ON ME**  
(E. PHIPPS)

BY ERNEST PHIPPS AND HIS HOLINESS SINGERS  
VOCAL GROUP WITH VIOLIN, PIANO, MANDOLIN,  
GUITARS AND CLAPPING.

RECORDED IN 1930.

ORIGINAL ISSUE BLUEBIRD 5540A

MUST JESUS BEAR CROSS, WORLD GO FREE? CROSS FOR EVERY-  
ONE, YOU, ME. MUST I BE CARRIED TO SKY? LET LIGHT  
FROM LIGHTHOUSE SHINE ON ME.

THIS VERY WELL KNOWN SONG CAN BE FOUND IN PRACTICALLY  
ANY HYMNAL, USUALLY UNDER THE TITLE "MAITLAND, C.M."  
BY GEORGE N. ALLEN. RECENTLY IT IS ALMOST ALWAYS PER-  
FORMED AS HERE, WITH THE TEMPO MUCH FASTER AFTER  
SEVERAL SLOW VERSES; A DEVICE FIRST RECORDED BY WILLIE  
JOHNSON. (SEE DISCOGRAPHY BELOW)

DISCOGRAPHY: LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE ON ME, BLIND  
WILLIE JOHNSON. COLUMBIA 14490. SHINE ON ME,  
CARLISLE QUARTET. BLUEBIRD 6855.



Rev. F. W. McGee

55

**FIFTY MILES OF ELBOW  
ROOM**

BY REV. F. W. MCGEE

VOCAL GROUP WITH PIANO, TRUMPET,  
GUITAR AND CLAPPING.

RECORDED IN 1931.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 23680B

WHEN GATES WIDE ON OTHER SIDE ROOM FOR YOU, ME.  
FOUR SQUARE CITY, JASPER WALLS, LIMITS 1200 MILES.  
ON RIGHT HAND, ON LEFT HAND 50 MILES ELBOW ROOM

THE HIGHLY RHYTHMIC RELIGIOUS STYLE, HEARD ON NOS. 54,  
55, AND 56 OF THIS SET, WITH WIND INSTRUMENTS AND HAND  
CLAPPING, HAD EXISTED LONG BEFORE 1930 WHEN TECHNICALLY  
IMPROVED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT MADE RECORDING POSSIBLE.  
SOMETHING SIMILAR IS HEARD AS EARLY AS 1925 ON THE  
OKEH RELEASES BY CARTER BROTHERS - SMITH, BUT THESE ARE  
EXCEPTIONS. THE ECHO-LIKE RELATION OF THE VOICES IN THE  
DUET SECTION OF THIS PERFORMANCE OF "FIFTY MILES OF  
ELBOW ROOM" CAN ALSO BE HEARD IN NO. 2 OF THIS SET.

DISCOGRAPHY: FIFTY MILES OF ELBOW ROOM, THE CARTER FAMILY,  
BLUEBIRD 9026.

56

**I'M IN THE BATTLE  
FIELD FOR MY LORD**

(RICE)

BY REV. D.C. RICE AND HIS SANCTIFIED  
CONGREGATION

VOCAL GROUP WITH PIANO, TRUMPET, TROMBONE,  
STRING BASS, DRUMS AND TRIANGLE.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION 1262

WAS IN LOWLAND, HEARD VOICE OF JESUS, LEFT FRIENDS  
'AND KINDRED. ON ROCKY WAY. SOON SUN WILL SHINE IN  
SOUL; SAVIOR HEAL WOUNDED SPIRIT. ON BATTLEFIELD;  
PROMISE WILL SERVE LORD TILL DIE

THE PERSONALIZED NARRATIVE WITH A CHORUS BETWEEN EACH  
SOLO VERSE IS A STRUCTURE MUCH EARLIER THAN THE  
ORDERED, ALMOST BALLAD-LIKE TYPE OF WORDS HERE FITTED  
TO THAT PATTERN. THE FULLNESS OF THE ORCHESTRA AND  
THE ADVANCED STYLE OF THE SINGING SHOULD BE NOTED.  
FOR A SONG OF SOMEWHAT SIMILAR STRUCTURE, SEE NO. 48  
OF THIS SET.

57

**THE COO COO BIRD**

BY CLARENCE ASHLEY

VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 15489D (#149251)

BUILD CABIN ON MOUNTAIN, SEE WILLIE GO BY. COO-COO  
PRETTY BIRD; WARBLER, FLYS, HOLLERS COO-COO FOURTH  
JULY. PLAYED CARDS ENGLAND, SPAIN; BET BEAT YOU  
NEXT GAME. JACK O'DIAMONDS KNOWN FROM OLD, ROB  
POCKET OF SILVER, GOLD

THIS SONG IS OF THE FOLK-LYRIC TYPE DESCRIBED IN THE  
NOTES FOR NO. 7 OF THIS SET. THE FIRST VERSE IS ALSO  
HEARD ON "WAY DOWN THE OLD PLANK ROAD" BY DAVE MACON  
(NO. 78, THIS SET). BRITISH VERSIONS, OF THE CUCKOO  
CAN BE FOUND IN BUTTERWORTH'S FOLK SONGS FROM SUSSEX,  
P. 12, AND SHARP'S FOLK SONGS FROM SOMERSET, NO. 72.  
FOR FURTHER REFERENCES SEE KETTRIDGE'S NOTES IN THE  
JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE, 1911, PP.349-352.

DISCOGRAPHY THE CUCKOO, SHE'S A FINE BIRD, KELLY HARRELL,  
VICTOR 40047.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: MORRIS-365; RANDOLPH-1-237; SHARP-  
11-177; THOMAS-1-153; THOMAS-111-32; SEE ALSO

58

**EAST VIRGINIA**

BY BUELL KAZEE

VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 154B(35)

LEFT EAST VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA ROOM, COURTED YOUNG  
LADY, HER NAME I NOT KNOW. HAIR BROWN CURLY CHEEKS  
ROSY RED, ON BREST-RIBBON; WISH I WAS DEAD. PAPPA SAYS  
MARRY, MAMMA SAID NOT, I'LL TELL WHAT DO; DARK NIGHT,  
RAMBLE, RUN AWAY. RATHER IN HOLLER WHERE SUN REFUSED  
SHINE, AS YOU BE MAN'S WOMAN, NEVER MINE

NOW USUALLY CALLED "THE EAST VIRGINIA BLUES", THIS  
SONG IS A FREQUENTLY RECORDED AMERICAN FOLK COMPOSI-  
TION. BUELL KAZEE FROM BURTONS FORK, KENTUCKY, A STATE  
FAMOUS FOR ITS 5-STRING BANJO PLAYERS, GIVES AN INTER-  
ESTING DESCRIPTION OF HIS HOME-MADE INSTRUMENT ON  
BRUNSWICK 338-"A MOUNTAIN BOY MAKES HIS FIRST RECORDS".

BIBLIOGRAPHY: LOMAX-1V-58; SHARP-11-233

DISCOGRAPHY: I AM A MAN OF CONSTANT SORROW, EMERY  
ARTHUR. VOCALION 85208. EAST VIRGINIA BLUES, CARTER  
FAMILY. BLUEBIRD 5650. DARK HOLLER BLUES, CLARENCE  
ASHLEY. COLUMBIA 15763. OH, MOLLY DEAR GO ASK YOUR  
MOTHER, KELLY HARRELL. VICTOR 20280. DARLING THINK  
WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, MORRIS BROTHERS. BLUEBIRD 7967.



Cannon's Jug Stompers

59

MINGLEWOOD BLUES

(NOAH LEWIS)

VOCAL SOLO WITH HARMONICA, BANJO,  
JUG, GUITAR.

RECORDED IN MEMPHIS TENN., JAN 30, 1928.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21267A(41803)

NEVER LET ONE WOMAN RULE MIND, KEEP YOU WORRIED,  
TROUBLED ALL TIME, MARRIED WOMAN SEES ME SOMETIMES.  
GOT LETTER YOU OUGHT TO READ, YOU COMING SEE ME KNOCK  
ME ON HEAD

IN THIS SELECTION, AS ON MANY OTHER EARLY RECORDINGS  
MADE IN MEMPHIS, SINGING CAN BE HEARD HAVING AN EVEN  
'BUZZING' VIBRATO AND RELATIVELY SMALL INTERVALS BE-  
TWEEN THE NOTES, AS CONTRASTED TO THE LARGER INTERVALS  
AND SMOOTHER VOCAL TONE CENTERED IN TEXAS. THE VOCALIST  
ON THIS RECORD IS ASHLEY THOMPSON.  
THE MEMBERS OF CANNON'S JUG STOMPERS ARE USUALLY NOAH  
LEWIS (HARMONICA), GUS CANNON (JUG AND BANJO), AND  
ASHLEY THOMPSON (GUITAR).

60

I WOKE UP ONE MORNING  
IN MAY

By DIDIER HERBERT

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 40517F(111390)

THE ALMOST CONVERSATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THIS SONG  
OF UNHAPPY LOVE IS MORE RESTRAINED IN RANGE THAN MOST  
ARCADIAN SINGING. ITS EVEN, POWERFUL RHYTHM, AND CLEAR  
VOICE HOWEVER ARE, AS IN THE NEXT SELECTION, VERY  
TYPICAL OF LOUISIANA.

61

JAMES ALLEY BLUES

(R. BROWN)

By RICHARD (RABBIT) BROWN

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.

RECORDED IN NEW ORLEANS, LA., MARCH 5, 1927.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 20578A

TIMES AIN'T LIKE USED TO BE, TELLING TRUTH, TAKE  
FROM ME. SEEN BETTER DAYS, PUT UP WITH THESE, BETTER  
TIME GIRLS IN NEW ORLEANS. I BORN COUNTRY; SHE THINKS  
EASY LOSE, HITCH TO HER WAGON, DRIVE ME LIKE MULE.  
I BOUGHT GOLD RING, PAID RENT, SHE TRIED MAKE ME WASH  
CLOTHES. IF YOU DON'T WANT, TELL SO, I NOT MAN GOT NO  
WHERE GO. I GIVE SUGAR FOR SUGAR, SALT FOR SALT, IF  
CAN'T GET ALONG; YOUR FAULT. YOU WON'T LOVE, TREAT ME  
MEAN, YOU'RE MY DAILY THOUGHT NIGHTLY DREAM. SOMETIMES  
YOU TOO SWEET TO DIE, OTHER TIMES OUGHT BE BURIED ALIVE

RICHARD BROWN, ONE OF THE EARLIEST MUSICIANS TO LEARN  
THE TWELVE BAR 'BLUES' CHORD PATTERN, WAS THE FIRST AND  
MOST IMPORTANT NEW ORLEANS FOLK SINGER TO RECORD. THREE  
TEN-INCH SIDES "JAMES-ALLEY-BLUES", "I'M NOT JEALOUS"  
(VICTOR 20578), "NEVER LET THE SAME BEE STING YOU  
TWICE" (VICTOR 21475) AND TWO TWELVE-INCH ONES, (VICTOR  
35840) "MYSTERY OF THE DUNBAR CHILD", "SINKING OF THE  
TITANIC", WERE CUT IN A NEW ORLEANS GARAGE THE SAME DAY  
THAT TUBA PLAYER JOE HOWARD, ANOTHER ALUMNUS OF THE  
BUDDY BOLDEN BAND, RECORDED WITH LOUIS DUMAINE. BROWN  
WAS FAMOUS FOR HIS DRAMATIC GUITAR PLAYING WHICH, ON  
RECORDINGS, CLOSELY RESEMBLES THAT OF WILLIE JOHNSON.

62

SUGAR BABY

By "DOCK" BOGGS

VOCAL SOLO AND 5-STRING BANJO,  
WITH GUITAR BY HUB MAHAFFY.

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 118B(01)

GOT NO SUGAR BABY NOW. ALL I CAN DO; SLEEP WITH YOU,  
CAN'T GET ALONG THIS WAY; I'LL SING TO YOUR MAMMA PAY  
DAY. GOT NO USE FOR RED ROCKING CHAIR: NO SUGAR BABY.  
WHO WILL [I-WILL] ROCK CRADLE, SING SONG WHEN I AM  
[YOU ARE] GONE. IN SHADE, GIVE EVERY DIME MADE, WHAT  
MORE COULD POOR BOY DO. SAID ALL CAN SAY, DONE ALL  
CAN DO, CAN'T MAKE LIVING WITH YOU  
IN LUNSFORD'S VERSION OF THE SONG PERFORMED HERE BY  
DOCK BOGGS, RED APPLE JUICE IS ADDED TO THE RED ROCK-  
ING CHAIR AS SOMETHING THE SINGER CAN DO WITHOUT.  
BIBLIOGRAPHY: LUNSFORD-50

63

I WISH I WAS A MOLE  
IN THE GROUND

By BASCOM LAMAR LUNSFORD

"THE MINSTREL OF THE APPALACHIANS"

VOCAL SOLO WITH 5-STRING BANJO

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 219B(132)

WISH WAS MOLE IN GROUND, WOULD ROOT MOUNTAIN DOWN.  
KIMPY WANTS 9 DOLLAR SHAWL; WHEN COME AROUND HILL  
WITH 40 DOLLAR BILL "BABY WHERE BEEN SO LONG", BEEN  
IN BEND WITH ROUGH, ROWDY MEN. DON'T LIKE RAILROAD  
MAN; KILL WHEN CAN, DRINK BLOOD LIKE WINE

THE NARRATOR'S WISH TO BE A MOLE IN THE GROUND AND  
A LIZZARD IN THE SPRING ARE QUITE SURREALISTIC IN  
THEIR SYMBOLISM. "THE BEND" ("PEN" IN SOME OTHER  
VERSIONS) PROBABLY REFERS TO THE BIG BEND PENITEN-  
TIARY. IN AN EARLIER RECORDING OF THIS SONG (OKEH,  
1925) THE BANJO IS EVEN MORE REMARKABLE IN ITS HALT-  
ING RHYTHMS, AND THE SINGER DECIDES HE WOULD "RATHER  
BE A LIZZARD....." LUNSFORD, A LAWYER OF ASHVILLE,  
NORTH CAROLINA, WRITES THAT THIS SONG IS A "TYPICAL  
PRODUCT OF THE PIGEON RIVER VALLEY"

DISCOGRAPHY: DARLING WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN SO LONG.

TENEVA RAMBLERS. VICTOR 21645. SAMMIE, WHERE HAVE  
YOU BEEN SO LONG, DOCK BOGGS. BRUNSWICK 131. I WISH

I WAS A MOLE IN THE GROUND, BASCOM LAMAR LUNSFORD.

OKEH 40155. SEE ALSO AAFS 102.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BOTKIN-900; GORDON-79; JOHNSON-11-  
172; LOMAX-11-152; LUNSFORD-10; PERROW-VOL.28-132;  
SANDBURG-220- 326

64

THE MOUNTAINEER'S  
COURTSHIP

By MR. AND MRS. ERNEST V. STONEMAN

VOCAL DUET WITH HARMONICA, GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1926.

ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 45125(W81080B)

WHEN YOU COMING TO SEE ME? NEXT SUNDAY IF WEATHER  
IS GOOD. HOW LONG YOU COURT ME? ALL NIGHT. WHEN YOU  
THINK WE MARRY? IN WEEK. WHAT YOU GOING TO WEDDING  
IN? LOG SLED. WHY NOT BRING BUGGY? OX WON'T WORK TO  
BUGGY. WHO YOU BRING? CHILDREN. DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD  
CHILDREN. GOT SIX CHILDREN. TELL AUNT SALLY GOOSE  
IS DEAD. ONE SHE'D SAVING FOR FEATHER BED

STRUCTURALLY THIS DUET IS SIMILAR TO "THE QUAKERS  
WOOLING", "THE DEAF WOMAN'S COURTSHIP", AND SEVERAL  
OTHERS, BUT THE SPECIFIC COMPOSITION DOESN'T SEEM  
TO APPEAR IN ANY STANDARD WORK. THE "GO TELL AUNT  
SALLY" VERSES AT THE END OF THE RECORD ARE FROM  
ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY KNOWN AMERICAN SONGS, AND ALL  
OF THE REFERENCES GIVEN BELOW REFER TO IT, AND NOT  
TO "THE MOUNTAINEER'S COURTSHIP".

DISCOGRAPHY: THE OLD GREY GOOSE, CAROLINA TAR HEELS.  
VICTOR 40177.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: GARDINER-466; GORDON-85; JACKSON-1-173;  
LOMAX-11-305; LOMAX-V-16; PERROW-VOL.26-130; RANDOLPH-11-  
347; SCARBOROUGH-1-8-195; SHARP-345 OWENS-262



Stoneman's Mountaineers

"No Sir"  
 Tell me one thing tell me truly  
 Tell me why, you scorn me so  
 Tell me if when asked a question  
 You should always answer, "No"  
 No sir, No sir, No sir No sir  
 No sir, No sir, No sir, No.

If while strolling in the garden  
 Plucking flowers, do wilt with care  
 Tell me, should you be offended  
 If I walked & talked with you?

My father was a Spanish Merchant  
 Dead before he went to sea  
 He told me to be true & true  
 No to all you said to me.

If while walking in the garden  
 I should ask you to be mine  
 And should tell you that I loved you  
 Would you then my heart decline  
 Chorus No sir, No sir, No sir, No sir,  
 No sir, No sir, No sir, No.

## 65 THE SPANISH MERCHANTS DAUGHTER

(E. STONEMAN)  
 BY STONEMAN FAMILY  
 VOCAL DUET BY HATTIE AND ERNEST STONEMAN  
 WITH HARMONICA, VIOLIN, GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN 1930.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-40206

FATHER, SPANISH MERCHANT, BEFORE WENT TO SEA, MADE ME PROMISE SAY "NO SIR" TO ALL YOU SAY. YOUR FATHER AGAINST ME, SHOULD HE NOT RETURN, AND YOU HAVE NO MOTHER WOULD YOU THEN SAY NO? "NO SIR". SHOULD FATHER NOT RETURN I HAVE BROTHER CARE FOR ME. IN GARDEN PLUCKING ROSES WOULD YOU BE OFFENDED IF I WALKED, TALKED WITH YOU? "NO SIR". I KNOW WORLD IS CRUEL, BUT WILL ALWAYS SAY "NO SIR" TILL FROM FATHER I HEAR. IN GARDEN BY YOUR SIDE WOULD YOU REFUSE TO BE BRIDE? NO SIR, NO, NO

MEMBERS OF THE STONEMAN FAMILY SOMETIMES WITH KAHLE BREWER, M. MOONEY, AND "ECK" DUNFORD, MADE MORE THAN FIFTY IMPORTANT FOLK SONG RECORDINGS FOR THE OKEH, GENETT, AND VICTOR COMPANIES BETWEEN 1925 AND 1930. THE DUETS GIVEN HERE AND IN NO. 64 OF THIS SET, AND THE DUNFORD RECORD (NO. 9 OF THIS SET), ARE GOOD EXAMPLES OF THE WORK OF THESE ARTISTS, ALL OF WHOM ARE PROBABLY FROM THE VICINITY OF GALUX, VIRGINIA. "THE SPANISH MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER" SEEMS TO BE MODELED ON AN EARLIER SONG "OH NO JOHN".

BIBLIOGRAPHY: EDDY-146; POUND-43; RANDOLPH-111-104;  
 STOUT-44

Jama - 1920.

**CARELESS LOVE BLUES.**  
 BY A. & C. CORVET.  
 THE OLD WAY.  
 FOX TROT. COMPOSED BY EDWARD CLAW.

# 66

## BOB LEE JUNIOR BLUES

(CLAYTON SHADE)  
 BY MEMPHIS JUG BAND  
 VOCAL SOLO WITH KAZOO, BANJO-MANDOLIN,  
 JUG, GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN MEMPHIS TENN. 1927.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21356A(40324)

CAN'T SLEEP DREAMING, CAN'T WAKE CRYING, MAN I LOVE TROUBLE ALL TIME. I'LL FOLLOW WHERE HE GOES. "CONDUCTOR LET ME RIDE BLINDS". "THIS GARBAGE TRAIN AIN'T MINE". HATE TRAIN THAT CARRIED MAN AWAY; SAME TRAIN BRING HIM BACK SOMEDAY

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE VOCAL TYPE FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH MEMPHIS (SEE NOTES FOR NO. 59 OF THIS SET). THE ACCOMPANIMENT IS SIMILAR TO THE URBAN DANCE STYLE, AND TOWARD THE END OF THE RECORD A RHUMBA ARRANGEMENT OF THE WELL KNOWN "CARELESS LOVE" IS INTRODUCED. GOOD VOCAL VERSIONS OF THIS LAST SONG HAVE BEEN MADE BY LULU JACKSON (VOCALION 1193) AND EVA PARKER (VICTOR 39020).

# 67

## SINGLE GIRL, MARRIED GIRL

(A.P. CARTER)  
 BY THE CARTER FAMILY  
 VOCAL SOLO (BY SARA CARTER) WITH  
 AUTOMARP, GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN MACES SPRINGS VIRGINIA, 1927  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 20937A

SINGLE GIRL: DRESSED FINE, GOES TO STORE BUYS, GOING WHERE PLEASE. MARRIED GIRL: WEARS ANY KIND, ROCKS CRADLE CRY, BABY ON KNEES

MADE AT THE CARTER FAMILY'S FIRST RECORDING SESSION, THIS COMPOSITION IS NOT EASILY LOCATED IN ANY STANDARD PRINTED COLLECTION, ALTHOUGH IT IS OF A TYPE FREQUENTLY REPRESENTED BY SUCH SONGS AS "WHEN I WAS SINGLE", "LORD, I WISH I WAS A SINGLE GIRL AGAIN", "THE SPORTING BACHELOR" ETC.

# 68

## LE VIEUX SOULARD ET SA FEMME

(THE OLD DRUNKARD AND HIS WIFE)  
 BY CLEMO BREAUX AND JOSEPH FALCON  
 VOCAL SOLO AND TALKING WITH  
 ACCORDION, GUITAR.  
 RECORDED IN 1928.  
 ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 14301D(146908)

PIONEER LOUISIANA FRENCH RECORDING ARTISTS, AND POSSIBLY THE MOST FAMOUS OF ALL ARCADIAN MUSICIANS, MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH FALCON HAD MADE MORE THAN 150 SIDES FOR COLUMBIA, VICTOR, AND DECCA BEFORE MRS. FALCON (CLEMO BREAUX) DIED A FEW YEARS AGO. THE COMBINATION OF SPEAKING AND SINGING IN THE SELECTION GIVEN HERE IS UNUSUAL. OTHER PERFORMANCES BY THE FALCONS CAN BE HEARD ON NOS. 38 AND 77 OF THIS SET.



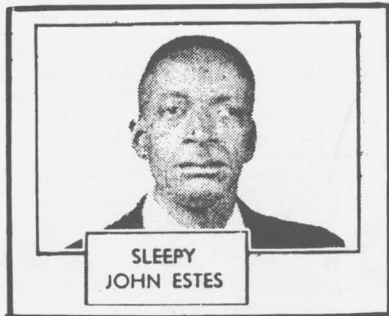
69

**RABBIT FOOT BLUES**

(L. JEFFERSON)  
BY BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1927.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 12454A(3089-1,497)

BLUES JUMPED RABBIT, RAN MILE, RABBIT CRIED LIKE CHILD. YOU HUNGRY, COME LUNCH WITH ME, WANT TO STOP WOMEN WORRYING ME. UNEEDA BISCUITS, HALF PINT GIN; GIN FINE BISCUITS THIN. TELL ABOUT MEATLESS, WHEATLESS DAYS, THIS NOT HOME DON'T THINK I STAY, CRIED FOR FLOUR, MEAT GONE; FEED ME CORN BREAD, I CAN'T STICK AROUND. GOT KNAPSACK, SUBMARINE, GET KAISER, BE' I7. HITCH ME TO BUGGY DRIVE LIKE MULE; GOING HOME, AIN'T FOOLED

THE FIRST AUTHENTIC RECORDINGS OF TEXAS FOLK SONGS WERE MADE BY THIS ARTIST IN THE RUG DEPARTMENT OF A DALLAS STORE IN 1924. HIS INJECTION OF SHORT INDEPENDENT MELODIC GUITAR PHRASES AT THE END OF EACH VOCAL LINE, TYPICAL OF TEXAS PLAYING, IS SELDOM SO BEAUTIFULLY DEVELOPED AS IN JEFFERSON'S WORK. MENTION OF THE 1ST WORLD WAR WAS UNUSUAL BY THE DATE THIS RECORD WAS MADE.



70

**EXPRESSMAN BLUES**

(JAMES RACHEL)  
BY JOHN ESTES  
VOCAL SOLO WITH PIANO, MANDOLIN, GUITAR.  
RECORDED MAY 17, 1930, 4 P.M.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 233188

EXPRESSMAN, YOU'VE GONE WRONG MOVED GIRL WHEN I WAS FROM HOME. WOMAN MAKES MAN DO THINGS KNOWS WRONG, THAT'S WHY I SING LONESOME SONG. IF YOU NEVER HEAR ME MORE, REMEMBER MORNING I WALKED ON YOUR PORCH. GOING TO SING THIS, NO MORE, MANDOLIN UNDER ARM, GO

ABOUT 1930 THE BANJO SEEMS TO HAVE DECLINED IN FAVOR AMONG FOLK MUSICIANS FOR IT IS SELDOM RECORDED AFTER THAT DATE. BALANCING THE SHARP TONED BANJO AGAINST A SOFTER, MORE EXTENDED GUITAR NOTE, WHICH HAD BEEN VERY POPULAR FORMERLY, WAS OFTEN REPLACED BY A MANDOLIN AND GUITAR COMBINATION. THE REMARKABLE VOCAL GIVEN HERE WITH ACCOMPANIMENT OF PIANO (AS THE SOFT TONE) AND MANDOLIN, IS ONE OF THE FIRST RECORDINGS IN WHICH THE LATTER INSTRUMENT IS FEATURED.

71

**POOR BOY BLUES**

(WILLARD THOMAS)  
BY RAMBLIN' THOMAS  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.  
RECORDED 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 12722A(21020-4)

POOR BOY LONG WAYS FROM HOME. WAS IN LOUISIANA DOING AS PLEASE, NOW IN TEXAS; WORK OR LEAVE. IF YOUR HOME'S LOUISIANA WHAT DOING HERE? MY HOME AIN'T TEXAS, SURE DON'T CARE. IF BOAT-DON'T LAND, STAY ON WATER LONG AS ANY MAN. BOAT CAME ROCKING LIKE DRUNKEN MAN; HOME IS ON WATER, DON'T LIKE LAND

THIS AND THE NEXT FOUR SELECTIONS ARE PROBABLY FACETS OF A SINGLE FOLK-LYRIC COMPLEX (SEE NOTE FOR NO. 7 OF THIS SET). IN THESE SONGS, MOST OF THE VERSES ARE SELECTED FROM A GENERAL STOCK OF ABOUT 800 FREQUENTLY HEARD COUPLETS DEALING WITH PRISON. ALTHOUGH THERE IS LITTLE DUPLICATION AMONG THE FIVE SONGS GIVEN HERE, IN OTHER PERFORMANCES VARIOUS INTERMEDIATE FORMS CAN BE HEARD. THE "BANJO JOE" RECORD LISTED BELOW HAS MANY PHRASES OF THE VERSION OF "POOR BOY" IN THIS SET, BUT ALSO INCORPORATES ELEMENTS IDENTIFIED WITH THE PHRASE "BUCKET'S GOT A HOLE IN IT".

DISCOGRAPHY: POOR BOY LONG WAYS FROM HOME, BANJO JOE. PARAMOUNT 12571.  
BIBLIOGRAPHY: ODUM-1-169

72

**FEATHER BED**

(GUS CANNON)  
BY CANNON'S JUG STOMPERS  
VOCAL SOLO WITH HARMONICA, BANJO,  
JUG, GUITAR.  
RECORDED MEMPHIS TENN., AUG. 9, 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-385158

REMEMBER, BEFORE WAR, SLEEP ON STRAW, NOW FEATHER BED. WENT UPTOWN, DEACON'S HOUSE, THOUGHT HEARD MY BABY CRY. WENT DOWNTOWN, DIDN'T MEAN HARM, POLICE GRAB ARM, (BEGAN TO KICK, THROW ME IN AIR) DOING BEST FIND BOY STOLE VEST. WENT COURTSQUARE FIND BOY STOLE COAT. (JUDGE) STAND, LAWBOOKS IN HAND, PULL OUT WRIT, SOMEBODY BEEN STEALING FIRST DEGREE. BRITT AND BROWN, GOING ACROSS STREET GOING TO TOWN. OVER THE ROAD I'M BOUND TO GO

THE MELODY USED IN THIS RECORDING IS USUALLY CALLED "LOST JOHN" AND TRADITIONALLY FEATURES THE HARMONICA; HERE PLAYED BY NOAH LEWIS. THE CHORUS "OVER THE ROAD I'M BOUND" IS SELDOM HEARD OTHER THAN IN SONGS DEALING WITH PRISON.

DISCOGRAPHY: LOST JOHN. HENRY WHITTER. OKEH 40391.  
OVER THE ROAD I'M BOUND TO GO. UNCLE DAVE MACON. BRUNSWICK 329.



No. 75—HARMONICA HOLDER. Entire frame of strong, nickel-plated wire to fit shape of neck and is adjustable to any position. Holder folds up flat to fit coat pocket or case with other instruments. Dozen -----\$9.00

Topics

## SONGS FROM DIXIE



THESE are the Dixie songs, a type of music unknown to many people. We call them "The Songs From Dixie" - they are recordings of songs and tunes that were born in the hills of Kentucky, the rolling towns of West Virginia, or shortly after all of the less populated sections below the Mason-Dixon Line. Most of these songs are the recreation of some actual events, such as theme and ten have been published. They have been carried down from generation to generation by word of mouth and are almost in their original form. American Folk Music then anything in the United States.

They are recorded not by imitators, but by people who have been born and raised in the sections of the country where they are popular and the obvious sincerity of their efforts will make them interesting to everyone. Many of the numbers recorded have been heard by all of us at some time or other in our lives and their simplicity offers a pleasant change from the elaborate compositions of the present day dance orchestra.

Here are some excellent examples of this type of music. Even the titles are interesting.

132	Peter's Pull Danville Gull	"Duck" Boggs
104	Back Yard Rabbits Brazil Tennessee Blues	"W" Hopkins and His Puckin' Busters
112	Death of John Henry On the Dixie Bee Line	Walt Dave Mason
111	When the Roses Bloom Again There's No Disappointment in Heaven	McFarland and Gardner
160	The Three Downcast Sisters Billy, The Kid	Vergen Dalhart
139	The Return of Mary Vickers The Man's Doom	Vergen Dalhart
119	Scandin' In Need of Prayer Walk the Streets of Glory	McClung Brothers

McClung Brothers

# 73

## COUNTRY BLUES

By "DOCK" BOGGS

VOCAL SOLO WITH BANJO  
RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 131A(96)

COME PEOPLE WHIL I'VE MONEY, TOMORROW MIGHT (NOT) HAVE DOLLAR OR FRIEND. WHEN HAD MONEY, FRIENDS AROUND, POCKET BOOK EMPTY, NOT FOUND. LAST SAW MY WOMAN HAD WINEGLASS IN HAND, DRINKING DOWN TROUBLE. DADDY TAUGHT PLENTY, MAMMA MORE, SAID QUIT RONDY WAYS (OR) TROUBLE AT DOOR. WROTE WOMAN I'M IN JAIL, SHE WROTE ANSWER, "COMING FOR BAIL". 40 DOLLARS WON'T PAY FINE, WHISKY H&S MY BODY, WOMEN MY MIND. BREAD WHEN HUNGRY, WHISKY WHEN DRY, PRETTY WOMEN AROUND, HEAVEN WHEN DIE. IF LISTENED TO MAMMA WOULDN'T BE HERE; DRINKING, SHOOTING, GAMBLING, AT HOME NOT STAY. DIG HOLE IN MEADOW (GROUND) SEE THIS ROUNDER DOWN. WHEN I DEAD, BURIED, FACE TO SUN, COME MOURN, THINK WAY YOU DONE

THE VERSES IN THIS SONG BEGINNING "LAST TIME I SAW MY LITTLE WOMAN" AND "GO DIG A HOLE IN THE MEADOW" ARE ALWAYS ALWAYS CONNECTED WITH "DARLING CORA" OF WHICH THIS MAY BE A PERSONALIZED VERSION. THE SECTIONS BEGINNING "GIVE ME CORN BREAD WHEN I'M HUNGRY" AND "WHEN I'M DEAD AND BURIED" (SEE NOS. 2 AND 6 OF THIS SET) ARE AMONG THE MOST FREQUENTLY USED VERSES.

DISCOGRAPHY: DARLING CORA, BUELL KAZEE, BRUNSWICK 154.

DARLING CORA, B.F. SHELTON, VICTOR 35838.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: THOMAS-11-122



# 74

## NINETY-NINE YEAR BLUES

(J. DANIELS)

By JULIUS DANIELS

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1927.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 206588

BRING PISTOL, BALL, KILL EVERYBODY THAT DRAG POOR BOY. MONDAY ARRESTED, TUESDAY TRIED, JUDGE FOUND ME GUILTY, HUNG HEAD CRIED, WHAT FINE? PICK, SHOVEL, COAL MINE. AIN'T BEEN HERE BEFORE, GIVE 99 YEARS, COME BACK NO MORE

PHRASES AND CONSTRUCTIONS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THIS SONG CAN BE FOUND IN LOMAX II, III, AND IV, ODUM AND JOHNSON I AND II, AND WHITE. MORE RECENT RECORDINGS (1934-1938) DEALING WITH THE SAME IMAGES ARE "ANGOLA BLUES" BY JACK DUPREE, (OKEH 05823), "LONESOME DAY BLUES" BY JESSE JAMES (DECCA 7213), "LAST FAIR DEAL GONE DOWN" BY ROBERT JOHNSON (VOCALION 03445) AND "PARCHMAN FARM BLUES" (OKEH 05683) BY BUKKA WHITE. THE GUS CANNON RECORD LISTED BELOW HAS SOME LINES IN COMMON WITH THE SONG JULIUS DANIELS SINGS HERE.

DISCOGRAPHY: VIOLA LEE BLUES, CANNONS JUG STOMPERS, VICTOR 38523.

# 75

## PRISON CELL BLUES

By BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 12622B(20388-2)

TIRED OF SLEEPING IN LONESOME CELL, WOULDN'T BEEN HERE IF NOT FOR NELL. AWAKE AT NIGHT, CAN'T EAT BITE, USED TO BE RIDER, WON'T TREAT ME RIGHT. RED EYED "CAPTAIN" SQUABBLING FORE! MAD DOG SARGENT WON'T KNOCK OFF! ASKED GOVERNOR KNOCK OFF TIME WAY I'M TREATED LOSE MIND. WROTE GOVERNOR, TURN ME LOOSE, NO ANSWER, NO USE. HATE TURN OVER FIND RIDER GONE, HOW I'M ON

THE CLEAR TONE AND LONG RUNS, SO TYPICAL OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA VOCAL STYLE, ARE HEARD VERY WELL HERE. THE DEVICE USED IN THIS SONG OF REVERSING THE LINE ORDER OF THE FIRST VERSE TO PRODUCE THE FINAL VERSE IS STILL FREQUENTLY EMPLOYED.

# 76

## SEE THAT MY GRAVE IS KEPT CLEAN

By BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR

RECORDED IN 1928.

ORIGINAL ISSUE PARAMOUNT 126088(20374-1)

FAVOR I ASK YOU, SEE MY GRAVE KEPT GREEN. LONG LANE, NO END, BEAR AWAY WITH SILVER CHAIN. TWO WHITE HORSES IN LINE, TAKE ME TO BURYING GROUND. HEART STOPPED, HANDS COLD. YOU HEARD COFFIN SOUND? POOR BOY IN GROUND. DIG GRAVE WITH SILVER SPADE, LEAD DOWN WITH GOLDEN CHAIN. YOU HEARD CHURCH BELL? POOR BOY'S DEAD AND GONE

IN WALTER AND BYRD'S WASN'T IT SAD ABOUT LEMON (PARAMOUNT 12945), AFTER MENTIONING THAT JEFFERSON WAS BORN IN TEXAS AND DIED "ON THE STREETS OF CHICAGO", THEY SING THAT THE LAST TUNE HE RECORDED WAS "SEE THAT MY GRAVE IS KEPT GREEN". THE MASTER NUMBERS OF THIS RECORD ALSO SEEM TO INDICATE IT WAS MADE AT HIS LAST SESSION. ON THE OTHER SIDE (OF PARAMOUNT 12945) REV. EMMET DICKENSON PARALLELS THE LIFE OF JEFFERSON WITH THAT OF CHRIST. "SEE THAT MY GRAVE IS KEPT GREEN" IS OFTEN KNOWN AS "TWO WHITE HORSES IN A LINE" AND ALMOST ALWAYS, AS HERE, IMITATES THE TONE OF A CHURCH BELL AT ONE POINT.

DISCOGRAPHY: TWO WHITE HORSES IN A LINE, THE TWO POOR BOYS, ROMEO 5081, SEE A.A.F.S. 17

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ODUM-129; SANDBURG-472



77

C'EST SI TRISTE SANS  
LUI  
(IT IS SO BLUE WITHOUT HIM)  
BY CLEMO BREAUX WITH JOE FALCON AND  
OPHY BREAUX  
VOCAL SOLO WITH ACCORDION, GUITAR.  
RECORDED IN 1929.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 40608F (#110551)

FOR A FULL DISCUSSION OF ARGADIAN MUSIC SEE WHITFIELD'S LOUISIANA FRENCH FOLK SONGS. FURTHER INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE FOUND IN THE NOTES FOR NOS. 31, 36, 39, 60 AND 68 OF THIS SET.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: WHITFIELD-9



78

WAY DOWN THE OLD PLANK  
ROAD  
BY UNCLE DAVE MACON  
VOCAL SOLO AND BANJO WITH GUITAR BY  
SAM MCGEE.  
RECORDED IN 1926.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION B15321 (53)

RATHER IN RICHMOND WITH HAIL AND RAIN, THAN GEORGIA WEARING BALL AND CHAIN. WENT MOBILE, GET GRAVEL TRAIN, NEXT I KNEW: BALL AND CHAIN. WHAT MAKES TREAT SO, WEAR BALL, CHAIN, ANKLE SORE. NASHVILLE PRETTY, MEMPHIS BEAUTY, SEE PRETTY GIRLS - CHATTANOOGA. [FARE YOU WELL I'M GONE]. BUILD SCAFFOLD ON MOUNTAIN, SEE GIRL RIDING BY. WIFE DIED FRIDAY, SATURDAY-BURIED, SUNDAY, MY COURTING DAY, MONDAY-MARRIED. [KILL YOURSELF]. 18 POUNDS MEAT A WEEK, WHISKY TO SELL, CAN YOUNG MAN STAY HOME, GIRLS LOOK SO WELL. WON'T GET DRUNK NO MORE ON PLANK ROAD

DAVE MACON "THE DIXIE DEW DROP" WAS BORN AT SMART STATION, TENNESSEE, OCTOBER 7TH, 1870. HE LEARNED HIS TRADE IN NASHVILLE, WHERE HIS PARENTS OPERATED THE MACON HOTEL, A THEATRICAL BOARDING HOUSE, AND BECAME A PROFESSIONAL ENTERTAINER ABOUT 1898. MANY OF THE SONGS HE LEARNED BEFORE 1900 FROM WORKERS ON THE LEVEE AND ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI WERE RECORDED AMONG THE HUNDRED OR SO TITLES HE CUT BETWEEN 1923 AND 1938, AND ARE UNIQUE AMONG COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS. HIS DESCRIPTIONS OF LIFE ON THE CHAIN GANG HERE AND ON NO. 79 OF THIS SET ARE TWO OF THE MOST CHARACTERISTIC OF A NUMBER OF SONGS OF THIS TYPE HE RECORDED. THE VERSES ABOUT THE SCAFFOLD (SEE NO. 57 OF THIS SET) AND THE WIFE'S DEATH ARE WIDELY KNOWN FOLK-LYRIC ELEMENTS. (SEE NOTES FOR NO. 7 OF THIS SET)

DISCOGRAPHY: MY WIFE DIED SATURDAY NIGHT. DR. HUMPHREY; BATE. BRUNSWICK 271.  
BIBLIOGRAPHY: SHARP-11-277

79

BUDDY WON'T YOU ROLL  
DOWN THE LINE  
(MACON)  
BY UNCLE DAVE MACON  
VOCAL SOLO AND BANJO WITH BANJO-GUITAR  
BY SAM MCGEE.  
RECORDED IN 1930.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE BRUNSWICK 292

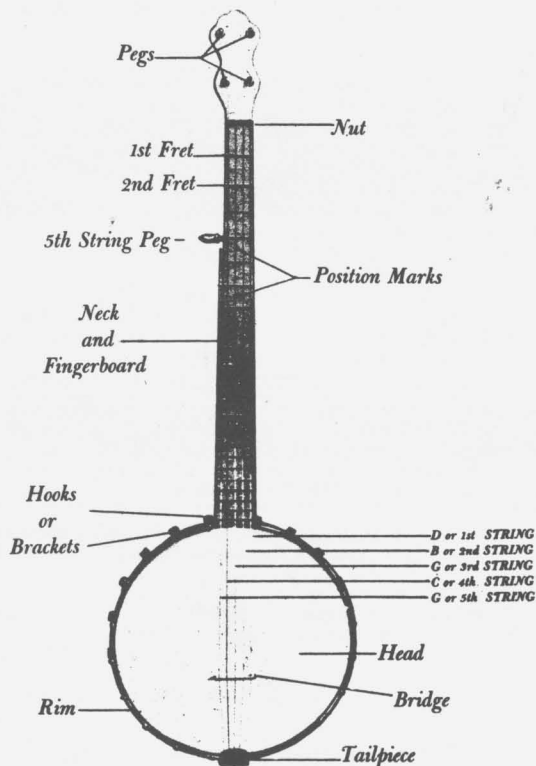
IN TENNESSEE, LEASE COME, WORK IN COAL MINE AGAINST FREE LABOR, MADE 'EM RISE AND SHINE. MONDAY MORNING MARCH THEM TO LONE ROCK LOOKING IN THAT MINE (HOLE), 'CAPTAIN' SAY "BETTER GET POLE", BEANS HALFDONE, BREAD NOT SO WELL, MEAT BURNT UP, COFFEE BLACK AS HECK, BUT TASTES GOOD. BOSS, HARD MAN; IF DON'T GET DONE, CARRY YOU TO STOCKADE, ON THE FLOOR YOU FALL, NEXT TIME HAVE POLE. BUDDY ROLL DOWN LINE, YONDER COMES MY DARLING, COMING DOWN LINE.

THIS RECORDING, ALONG WITH NOS. 78, 80, 81 AND 82 OF THIS SET ARE OF A TYPE OFTEN REFERRED TO AS "WORK SONGS" BECAUSE THEY ARE STRUCTURALLY ADAPTED TO RESPONSIVE CHANTING BY GANG WORKERS (SEE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS A.A.F.S. ALBUMS NOS. 3 AND 8). THE PERFORMANCES IN THE PRESENT SET HAVE BEEN GIVEN ACCOMPANIMENTS AND SOMEWHAT 'REFINED', BUT THE CHARACTERISTIC LEADER AND CHORUS PATTERN SURVIVES. THE WORDS IN THIS VERSION OF "ROLL DOWN THE LINE" ARE MORE REGIONALIZED THAN MOST.

DISCOGRAPHY: HEY BUDDY, WON'T YOU ROLL DOWN THE LINE. ALLEN BROTHERS. VOCALION 02818. ROLL ON BOYS. CAROLINA TAR HEELS. VICTOR 40024.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: GORDON-50

### THE BANJO and description of it's parts



80

## SPIKE DRIVER BLUES

BY MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT  
VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITARRECORDED IN 1930.  
ORIGINAL ISSUE OKEH 8692 (#401488)

TAKE HAMMER, CARRY TO CAPTAIN, TELL I'M GONE. HAMMER  
KILLED JOHN HENRY, WON'T KILL ME. LONG FROM EAST  
COLORADO TO HOME, JOHN HENRY LEFT HAMMER LAYING SIDE  
ROAD. JOHN HENRY STEEL DRIVING BOY, BUT WENT DOWN.  
THAT'S WHERE (WHY) I'M GONE

SONGS ABOUT JOHN HENRY ARE OF TWO GENERAL TYPES;  
THE BALLAD (SEE NO. 19 OF THIS SET) AND THE HAMMER  
SONG. THE VERSES OF THE LATTER ARE USUALLY COMPOUNDED  
WITH THE PHRASE "ROLL ON BUDDY", BUT NOT IN THE IN-  
TROSPLECTIVE VERSION GIVEN HERE. FOR VERSIONS OF THIS  
AND SIMILAR SONGS SEE JOHNSON'S JOHN HENRY (BIBLIOGRAPHY  
JOHNSON, I).

DISCOGRAPHY: NINE POUND HAMMER, GRAYSON AND WHITTER,  
VICTOR 40105. NINE POUND HAMMER IS TOO HEAVY, MONROE  
BROTHERS, BLUEBIRD 6422. THE NINE POUND HAMMER, AL  
HOPKINS, BRUNSWICK 177.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: BOTKIN-913; HENRY-441; JOHNSON-I-69;  
JOHNSON-11-218; LOMAX-V-322; LOMAX-IV-380; SANDBURG-  
150; SCARBOROUGH-I-219; SHARP-11-42; WHITE-261

81

## K. C. MOAN

(TEWEE BLACKMAN)  
BY MEMPHIS JUG BANDVOCAL TRIO WITH HARMONICA, KAZOO,  
BANJO, JUG, GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR V-38553A

THOUGHT I HEARD K.C. BLOW LIKE MY WOMEN ON BOARD.  
WHEN BACK ON K.C. ROAD, GOING TO LOVE BABY LIKE NEVER  
BEFORE

QUARTET ARRANGEMENT OF A WELL KNOWN WORK SONG. THE  
TRAIN IS A CONSTANTLY RECURRING SYMBOL IN COMPOSITIONS  
OF THIS CATEGORY.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ODUM-I-220; WHITE-273

82

## TRAIN ON THE ISLAND

(J.P. NESTOR)

BY J.P. NESTOR

VOCAL SOLO WITH VIOLIN AND BANJO.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VICTOR 21070A

TRAIN ON ISLAND, SINCE (THOUGHT) HEARD IT SQUEAL (BLOW),  
GO TELL TRUE LOVE CAN'T ROLL WHEEL, HAPPY DO FEEL  
[THINKING (LONG AS) I CAN GO]

THE SOUND OF A TRAIN IS HERE INTERPRETED ON BANJO AND  
VIOLIN. (SEE NOTES FOR NOS. 28 AND 29 OF THIS SET)  
WITH A MEAGER VOCAL ADAPTED FROM A WORK SONG. THE  
ARTISTS ARE PROBABLY BOTH FROM VIRGINIA.

83

## THE LONE STAR TRAIL

[TALKIE HIT FROM UNIVERSAL PICTURE

"THE WAGON MASTER"

BY KEN MAYNARD (THE AMERICAN BOYS  
FAVORITE COWBOY)

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR.

RECORDED IN 1930.

ORIGINAL ISSUE COLUMBIA 2310D (W149832)

I AM COWBOY IN TEXAS TRAIN, TRADE IS CINCHING SADDLES,  
PULLING BRIDLE REINS, LASSO WITH SKILL, EASE, LOVE  
ROLLING PRAIRIE; IF FIND LONGHORNS WILL JOURNEY ALL  
LIFE. IF HAD STEAK MARRIED I'D BE, ON TRAIL, DUSTY  
RISE, 50 MILES FROM WATER, GRASS DRY, BOSS MAD. WHEN  
LAKES FULL WATER, GRASS WAVING FINE, BOSS SHEDS  
FROWN. BEDDED DOWN FOR NIGHT, HORSE SHAKES SADDLE,  
HERD - FRIGHT, STAMPEDE. CLOUD IN WEST, FIRE ON HORNS,  
BOSS RIDES AROUND, PAY IN GOLD, I'LL FOLLOW LONG  
HORNS UNTIL TOO OLD

THIS PASSIONATE DESCRIPTION OF LIFE IS ONE OF THE  
VERY FEW RECORDINGS OF AUTHENTIC "COWBOY" SINGING.

84

## FISHING BLUES

(THOMAS)

BY HENRY THOMAS ("RAGTIME TEXAS")

VOCAL SOLO WITH GUITAR, AND WHISTLE.

RECORDED IN 1929.

ORIGINAL ISSUE VOCALION 1249

WENT ON HILL 12 O'CLOCK; GOT POLE. WENT TO HARDWARE;  
GOT HOOK, PUT LINE ON HOOK. LOOK DOWN RIVER, ONE  
O'CLOCK, SPIED CATFISH, GOT HUNGRY, GOING TO CATCH  
CATFISH. PUT ON SKILLET, LID, COOK SHORTNIN BREAD.  
YOU BEEN FISHING ALL TIME, I'M GOING FISHING TOO.  
BET LIFE, LOVING WIFE, CATCH MORE THAN YOU. ANY  
FISH BITE, I'M GOING FISHING TOO

THE VERSES IN THIS SONG ARE SELDOM HEARD EXCEPT FOR  
THE SHORTNIN BREAD COUPLET, WHICH IS WIDELY KNOWN.  
REFERENCES TO FISHING, OTHER THAN AS SEXUAL SYMBOLISM,  
ARE RARE IN AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC.  
ALL OF THE REFERENCES GIVEN BELOW REFER TO THE  
"SHORTNIN BREAD" VERSES AND NOT TO THE "FISHING"  
ONES.

DISCOGRAPHY: SHORTNIN' BREAD, DYKES MAGIC CITY TRIO,  
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SEE ALSO FISHING BLUES BY MEMPHIS MINNIE, VOCALION 1711  
FOR AN ALLIED COMPOSITION.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: ARNOLD-156; GORDON-75; HENRY-428;  
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BIBLIOGRAPHY: PERROW-VOL.26-127

## A FEW QUOTATIONS

FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS THAT HAVE BEEN USEFUL TO THE EDITOR  
IN PREPARING THE NOTES FOR THIS HANDBOOK.

"IN ELEMENTARY MUSIC THE RELATION OF EARTH TO THE SPHERE OF WATER IS 4 TO 3, AS  
THERE ARE IN THE EARTH FOUR QUARTERS OF FRIGIDITY TO THREE OF WATER."

ROBERT FLUDD

"CIVILIZED MAN THINKS OUT HIS DIFFICULTIES, AT LEAST HE THINKS HE DOES, PRIMITIVE  
MAN DANCES OUT HIS DIFFICULTIES."

R. R. MARRETT

"DO AS THY WILT SHALL BE THE WHOLE OF THE LAW."

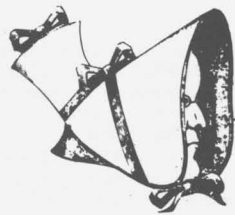
ALEISTER CROWLEY

"THE IN-BREATHING BECOMES THOUGHT, AND THE OUT-BREATHING BECOMES THE WILL MANIFES-  
TATION OF THOUGHT."

RUDOLPH STEINER

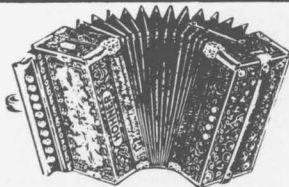


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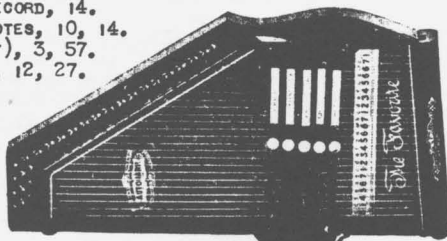


TITLES, ARTISTS, AND FIRST LINES OF ITEMS IN THIS SET ARE PRINTED IN LARGE CAPITALS. SUBJECTS, ALTERNATE TITLES, AND QUOTATIONS OTHER THAN FIRST LINES, ARE PRINTED IN SMALL CAPITALS. THE NUMBERS AFTER EACH ENTRY GIVE THE ITEMS IN THIS SET REFERRED TO BY THAT ENTRY.

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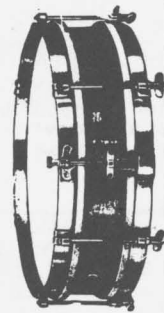
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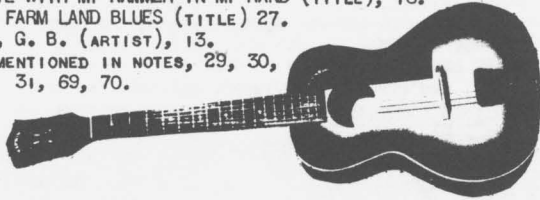
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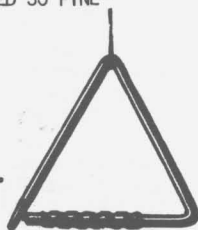
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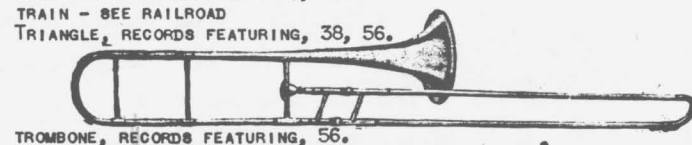
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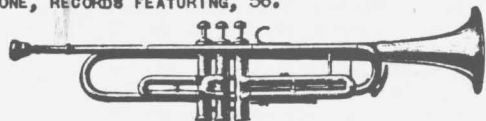
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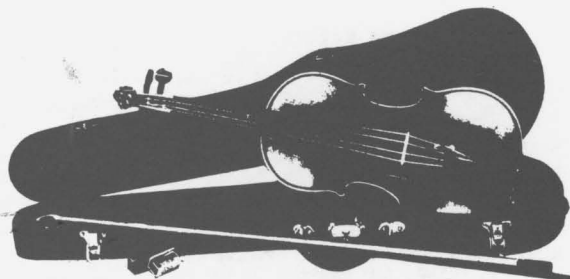
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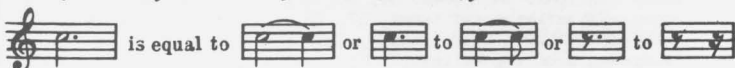
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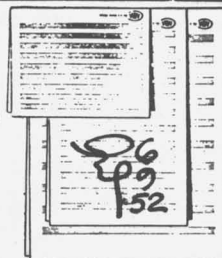
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## REMARKS

A Figure placed over or under these notes means that the figure notes are to be sung in the time specified for only two of the notes.

There have been many other signs and terms introduced into music, but you do not need to learn them in order to sing any ordinary song. If you will learn what the few here have in these lessons you can sing any song in this book correctly, or in any other book which contains only ordinary class or congregational music.

## GENERAL REMARKS

When tones should be sung softer and slower than usual. High and quick notes should be sung rather than low and slow notes.

In rapid tunes the note should be sung soft and freely, the second and release to sounding as the other parts come in.

When singing a tone on a long note, gradually swell the voice to the middle, then decrease softly, like the sound of a good bell dying away.

In advance each division of the class should learn to sing their part correctly, or nearly so, before the whole class takes in concert. The singing should not be continued too long at a time, so it injures the voice and produces dizziness.

It is much better to learn to sing the notes well by notes before trying to sing the whole, or better still, to sing the notes first, then the accompaniment in the piano. This is one reason why vocal music is so far superior to instrumental—the former not only pleases the ear, but reaches the soul and increases the understanding, while the latter only pleases the ear.

In learning to sing, endeavor should be made to cultivate the voice as an instrument. It is full, round, soft, smooth and elastic. Notes should be rounded together in each part so that when numbers are singing together there should appear to be but one uniform voice in each.

It is important that in singing, good style and good diction be observed. Diction is done by both singers and spectators, but little good will be accomplished. Particular attention should be given to the great trouble that we attend while singing the words. The most perfect care should be taken in singing to make the singers utter fully into the mouth and sound and make them clear. Concentrate your mind on the meaning of the words and the sense of the music, and you have it all before you, sounding, according, understanding, feeling the words, singing softly, lightly, clearly or gently, where the words require it.

Our great heavenly Father has graciously blessed most of us with the faculty of voice, and has given us talents that we should improve in that natural and heavenly music. Should we not be careful to have our own talent? They should be used to such a way as to glorify His name. All who have these talents given them should try to improve them and have love to sing and try to sing with the spirit and with the understanding, "singing melody in your heart to the Lord."

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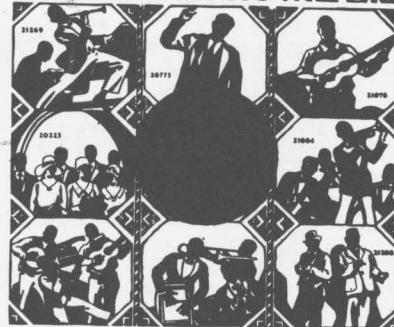
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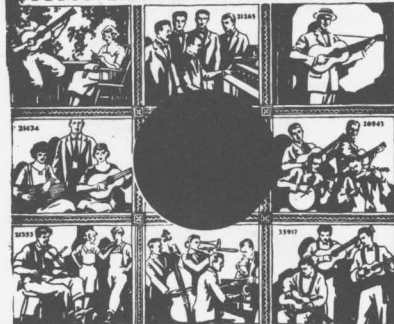
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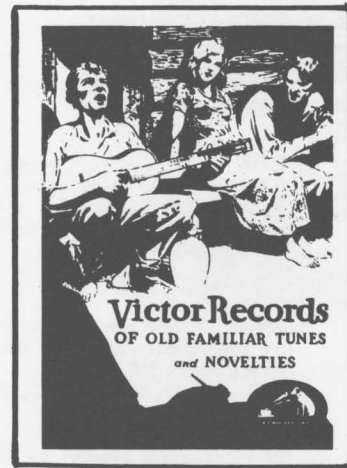


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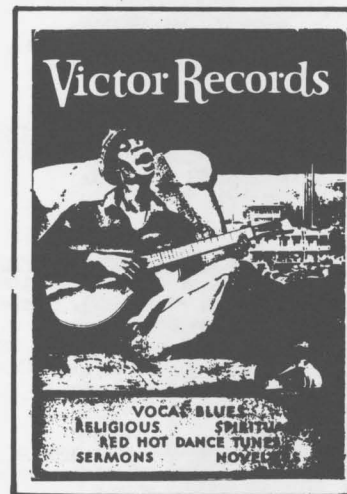


THE ADVERTISING ON THESE ENVELOPES GIVES A GOOD IDEA OF THE COMPANIES ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR ARTISTS.

- GORDON ROBERT WINSLOW GORDON, FOLK SONGS OF AMERICA, WORKS PROGRESS  
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11(13), 42(17), 46(21), 50(79), 66(1), 75(84A), 79(63),  
85(64A), 86(8).
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- HANDY W.C. HANDY, (EDITOR) BLUES, AN ANTHOLOGY, BONI, NEW YORK  
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3(26).
- HENRY EDWARD MELLINGER HENRY, FOLK SONGS FROM THE SOUTHE...  
HIGHLANDS, J.J. AUGUSTIN, NEW YORK 1938,  
102(2), 113(3), 119(4), 125(5), 195(6), 221(13), 279(7),  
301(9), 331(16), 338(21), 392(8), 426(22), 428(84A),  
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- HUDSON ARTHUR PALMER HUDSON, FOLK SONGS OF MISSISSIPPI, UNIVERSITY  
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77(1), 116(2), 119(3), 122(4), 124(5), 160(6), 187(13),  
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- JACKSON I GEORGE PULLEN JACKSON, WHITE SPIRITUALS IN THE SOUTHERN  
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- JOHNSON II J. ROSAMOND JOHNSON, ROLLING ALONG IN SONG, VIKING PRESS,  
NEW YORK 1937,  
163(84A), 172(63), 180(18), 182(24), 194(19), 218(80).
- LINSCOTT ELOISE HUBBARD LINSCOTT, FOLK SONGS OF OLD NEW ENGLAND,  
MACMILLAN, NEW YORK 1939,  
179(6), 188(5), 199(8), 259(4).
- LOMAX I JOHN A. AND ALAN LOMAX, COWBOY SONGS AND OTHER FRONTIER  
BALLADS, MACMILLAN, NEW YORK 1938,  
19(83), 283(14).
- LOMAX II JOHN A. AND ALAN LOMAX, AMERICAN BALLADS AND FOLK SONGS,  
MACMILLAN, NEW YORK 1934,  
3(18), 31(23), 34(24), 93(19), 103(21), 112(26), 124(17),  
152(63), 234(84A), 305(64A), 310(8), 332(25).
- LOMAX III JOHN A. AND ALAN LOMAX, NEGRO FOLK SONGS AS SUNG BY  
LEAD BELLY, MACMILLAN, NEW YORK 1936,  
184(26), 192(21).



SEGREGATED CATALOGUES ISSUED BY VICTOR IN 1929.



BY MOSES ASCH

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR, FOLKWAYS RECORDS.



IN DOCUMENTING AMERICA, JULY ISSUE OF LONG PLAYER, CHARLES EDWARD SMITH WRITES: "OUR MUSIC IS TRULY A PEOPLE'S MUSIC CREATED BY ALL AMERICANS...AND WE ARE LEARNING THE VARIETY OF THIS MUSIC . . . AND WHAT STAMPS IT AS BELONGING TO THIS LAND AND THIS PEOPLE. IN THIS THE PHONOGRAPH HAS BEEN A POTENT FACTOR."

IT WAS POINTED OUT, IN THE INTRODUCTION TO ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN MUSIC—JAZZ, VOLUME FP 53, VOLUME I THE SOUTH, THAT THE RECORD INDUSTRY HAS MANY CATEGORIES AND AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF CATALOGUES OF THE MUSIC THAT IT PRODUCES. THIS FACT IS AS TRUE TODAY AS WHEN (1926-1930) THE RECORDS IN THIS ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN MUSIC—FOLK, VOLUMES I, II, AND III WERE ORIGINALLY RECORDED.

MANY OF THESE RECORDS WERE PRODUCED FOR THE PURPOSE OF SALE TO ONE GROUP SUCH AS THE SHAPE NOTE SINGERS, THE ARGADIANS, THE RURAL DWELLERS ETC. WHILE OTHERS WERE SOLD IN LOCALITIES WHERE SINGERS AND TUNES WERE OF SUCH SUFFICIENT POPULARITY THAT THE MANUFACTURER TOOK LITTLE RISK IN MERCHANDISING THEM.

AGAIN, LET ME POINT OUT THAT THIS RICH HERITAGE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WAS NOT AND IS NOT AVAILABLE TO THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO LIVE IN METROPOLITAN AREAS. WHEN A WELL KNOWN AUTHORITY ON THIS MUSIC FIRST HEARD THE COLLECTION, HE SAID: "...AND WERE THESE RECORDS ACTUALLY PUT ON SALE IN STORES...ARE THEY REALLY FROM COMMERCIAL PRESSINGS?" LITTLE DO WE REALIZE THAT TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THESE LOCALITIES, THE TUNES AND SONGS HEARD ON THESE RECORDS, ALTHOUGH THEY LISTEN TO RADIO, WATCH MOVIES AND TELEVISION (IN THE PRIVACY OF THEIR HOMES, AT GATHERINGS, OR FOR THEMSELVES) ARE STILL THE INTIMATE PART OF THEIR LIVES RATHER THAN THE COMMERCIAL OR CLASSIC MUSIC HEARD AND ACCEPTED BY US URBANITES.

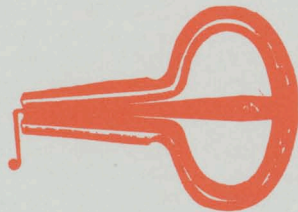
THIS COLLECTION IS GENERALLY FROM THE EASTERN AND SOUTH EASTERN SECTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES. THE SPANISH MUSIC OF AMERICA CAN BE HEARD IN THE ETHNIC FOLKWAYS LIBRARY ALBUM P 426 THE SPANISH AND MEXICAN FOLK MUSIC OF NEW MEXICO RECORDED AND EDITED BY J.D. ROBB.

THE PRODUCTION PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WERE AS FOLLOWS. THE RECORDINGS HAD TO BE GOOD ENOUGH TO BE REPRODUCED BY HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT, AND ONLY IN A VERY FEW CASES, WHERE THERE WERE HOLES THAT COULD NOT BE PLUGGED, WERE RECORDINGS OF POORER QUALITY RESORTED TO. SECOND, ALTHOUGH THE RECORDINGS HAD TO BE GOOD, THE MUSICAL RENDITION HAD TO BE OF THE NATURE BEFORE RADIO OR TALKING PICTURES HAD INFLUENCED THE RENDITION OF THE MUSICIAN AND SINGER. THE PERIOD FOUND TO HAVE BOTH OF THESE QUALITIES WAS BETWEEN 1926 AND 1930 (THAT IS WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRIC RECORDING (MICROPHONE ETC.) AND BEFORE RADIO AND THE MOVIES HAD INFILTRATED INTO THE REMOTEST PARTS OF RURAL LIFE). LATER WITH THE DEPRESSION, A DIFFERENT TYPE OF FOLK SONG EMERGED, WHICH WE HOPE TO SHOW IN FUTURE RELEASES IN THIS SERIES.

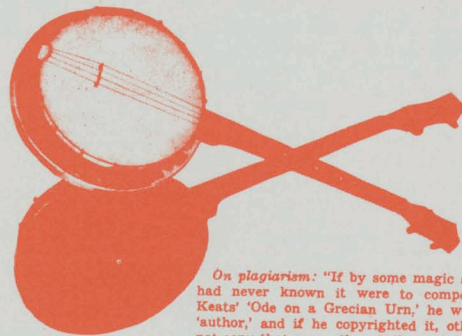
THE ONE LOGICAL WAY TO PRODUCE AN ANTHOLOGY OF THIS KIND, IS TO MAKE USE OF THE RECORDINGS THEMSELVES. BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE RECORD INDUSTRY, A GIVEN AMOUNT OF RECORDS ARE ISSUED OF ANY ONE SELECTION AND RE-PRESSINGS ARE NOT MADE UNTIL A LARGE RE-ORDER IS RECEIVED FROM DEALERS. THE USUAL AMOUNT IS 10,000 COPIES; HOWEVER RECORD MANUFACTURERS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO RE-PRESS 5,000 COPIES. SOME OF THE RECORDS IN THIS ANTHOLOGY HAD AN ORIGINAL PRESSING OF ONLY 500 COPIES. AS IT DOES NOT "PAY" TO RE-PRESS THIS TYPE OF MUSIC (PRODUCED TO SELL ONLY TO A LIMITED AUDIENCE), MANY OF THESE RECORDS ARE "COLLECTORS'" ITEMS AND THE BIBLIOGRAPHY IN THE NOTES FOLLOWING CONTAINS REFERENCES TO THESE RECORDS BY COLLECTORS.

IRONICALLY, IN 1952 THE RECORD INDUSTRY TRIED TO LEGALLY 'FREEZE' RE-ISSUES BY OTHER COMPANIES AND THE RECORD COMPANY THAT INSTIGATED THE LEGAL ACTION IN THIS STATE, AS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULDN'T PUT THROUGH A BILL TO THIS EFFECT, WAS THE ONLY ENGLISH RECORD COMPANY THAT SELLS AND DISTRIBUTES ITS OWN PRODUCTS IN THE UNITED STATES. THE IRONY IS THAT ENGLISH FOLKLORISTS COME TO THIS COUNTRY TO TRANSCRIBE THEIR MUSIC AS IT IS ALMOST NON-EXISTENT IN ENGLAND AND IN THIS COUNTRY THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LITERATURE CULTURE IS SO PRONOUNCED, GOVERNOR DEWEY VETOED THIS BILL. N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE APRIL 19, 1952.

## ENGLISH JAW HARPS



"Really, is it yours? I had supposed it was something old."—Unknown



On plagiarism: "If by some magic a man who had never known it were to compose a new Keats' 'Ode on a Grecian Urn,' he would be an 'author,' and if he copyrighted it, others might not copy that poem, though they might of course copy Keats."

Judge Learned Hand,

