

FOLK MUSIC OF THE UNITED STATES
Recording Laboratory AFS L2

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
WASHINGTON

Anglo-American Shanties, Lyric Songs, Dance Tunes and Spirituals

From the Archive of Folk Song

Edited by Alan Lomax



Each album includes...

INTRODUCTION

by

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In 1942 the Archive of Folk Song in the Library of Congress issued its first albums of recorded folk music, thereby making some of its rich collection of field recordings available to the public. The recordings were issued under the editorship of Alan Lomax, then head of the Archive. (The editing of the sixth album was entrusted to William N. Fenton.) Each album—they really were “albums” in those days—consisted of five 78-rpm records pressed in black shellac (the famous clear red vinyl was to come later). The albums patriotically mixed ten-inch and twelve-inch records—shellac was being rationed in 1942.

The six albums in the series were planned to exhibit the main varieties of American folk music:

- I. Anglo-American Ballads
 - II. Anglo-American Shanties, Lyric Songs, Dance Tunes and Spirituals
 - III. Afro-American Spirituals, Work Songs, and Ballads
 - IV. Afro-American Blues and Game Songs
 - V. Bahaman Songs, French Ballads and Dance Tunes, Spanish Religious Songs and Game Songs
 - VI. Songs from the Iroquois Longhouse.
- Each album included a brochure with tran-

scriptions of the texts sung on the records and notes on the music and performers.

Attempts to devise some method for distributing the Archive's recorded treasures had begun in 1941 with the establishment of the Recording Laboratory in the Library of Congress. The press release announcing the establishment of the Recording Laboratory claimed that

when the installation is completed the Music Division of the Library will be able to provide for schools, libraries, and individuals, recordings of American folk music, American poetry read and interpreted by its makers, unpublished string quartets, new American music and other similar materials. Much of this material stands ready for use on the shelves of the Library now—records of American folk music from many parts of the country, documents basic to the history and culture of America and of the world, musical manuscripts of composers, ancient and modern. Only students who are free to come to the Library or people who can afford to have expensive copies made, now use the Library's vast collection. To the great majority of citizens this material is accessible only through the books of research students and occasional radio broadcasts. The new sound service in the Library can make a great part of it available on phonograph records to the general public.

Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish was more eloquent in his proposal to the Carnegie Corporation, whose grant made possible the establishment of the Recording Laboratory:

I cannot too strongly express to you my own conviction that such a program would be a most important force in the life of this country at this moment. It seems to me that we can either educate the American people as to the value of their cultural heritage and their national civilization, or sit back and watch the destruction and disintegration of that culture and that civilization by forces now so ruinously active in this world.

The establishment of the Recording Laboratory made it possible for people to request the duplication of specific sound recordings. In addition, the Library published recordings in an attempt to get some of the Archive's material to the person who was interested in sampling its holdings without having a specific item in mind—the auditory equivalent of the library patron who just “wants a good book.” As a trial balloon for the project in 1941 the Friends of Music in the Library of Congress issued an album of two ten-inch records consisting of “Lady of Carlisle” sung by Basil May, “Pretty Polly” sung by Pete Steele, “It Makes a Long Time Man Feel Bad”—the archetypal Library of Congress folk-song title—sung by “a group of Negro convicts,” and “O Lord, Don’ low Me to Beat ’em,” sung, spoken, and cursed by Willie Williams. The next year the Archive of Folk Song albums which are the subject of this essay appeared.

In 1956, at the time of their first issue, the LPs were direct transfers from the 78s as issued Friends of Music album was combined with that on the first of the Archive of Folk Song albums to make the record now known as AFS L1. This allowed those who wanted to buy a long-playing version of the Friends of Music album to purchase a single record, but did create a few anomalies: as it is now constituted L1 contains two versions of “Pretty Polly” and presents Willie Williams and “group of convicts” under the banner of “Anglo-American Ballads.”

In 1956, at the time of their first issue, the LPs were direct transfers from the 78s as issued in 1942. At this time the records were renumbered: six albums numbered from I to VI containing records numbered from 1 to 30 became AFS L1 through L6. The brochures which had been prepared for the 78-rpm albums continued to be used with the LPs. This caused some confusion as the record number in the brochure no longer corresponded to the actual number of the item on the record.

During the years 1964 to 1966 the six LPs were remastered from the original field recordings; these remastered discs occasionally included alternate “takes” from those used on the original 78s. The remastering project also allowed the engineers to present complete versions of several cuts which had before appeared only as excerpts. Consequently the transcriptions of these songs in the brochures no longer accurately reflected the words on the records. This was one of the several considerations which led to the present revision of the textual material accompanying the recordings. The recordings themselves, though now numbered AFS 1 through 6 rather than AAFS 1 through 6 (reflecting the change of name of the issuing body from Archive of American Folk Song to Archive of Folk Song), have not been changed since the 1960s remastering.

The current republication furnishes all six records with new covers and a new sleeve note, supplies the present historical introduction, renumbers the notes on the selections to correspond to the numbering on the LP labels, and revises the transcriptions to include all the text contained on the LP. Otherwise the brochures read as they did when they first appeared in 1942. We have even hesitated to change transcriptions when our ears hear something different than did those of the original transcriber. This is partly attributable to cowardice. Revising such transcripts as those of Mrs. Ball’s nonsense syllables on AFS L2, A7 (“Jennie Jenkins”) or the ring-shout of AFS L3, A7 (“Run, Old Jeremiah”) is not a task one views with enthusiasm. But our decision was based partly on common sense. After all, Alan Lomax heard most of these people in person and singing many songs, while we only hear them for a single song and on a record.

Three decades later it is useful to look at these pioneering issues of recorded folk music and consider the assumptions—conscious and unconscious—that went into their production. Some of these assumptions have colored subsequent Library record issues up to the present day; others were not meant to apply to any but the first issues. Still, all of them played a part in the creation of the image of the Library

of Congress folk music record, and some—notably number 3 below—played an important part in its development. Here are some of these assumptions, more or less in descending order of importance:

1. The Library of Congress recordings were designed as a method of making the wealth of field recordings housed in the Archive of American Folk Song available to the public. They were—and have remained—recordings of material *from field recordings in the Archive*. (In 1976 the Library of Congress began a complementary series of recordings, *Folk Music in America*, edited by Richard K. Spottswood, which drew on commercial recordings and field collections other than those in the Archive, as well as an occasional irresistible Archive field recording.) This explains many of the questions asked about the Archive's series of folk music recordings, including the perennial "Why doesn't the Library of Congress issue a jazz series as well as a folk music series?" The answer: the field recordings of the Folk Archive did not, in the 1940s contain sufficient and sufficiently trenchant jazz material to undertake such a series. As the Archive's earliest field recordings were done in the late thirties and early forties in rural areas—see number 5 below—they would not have picked up much important jazz besides the roots-of-the-blues material so ably represented on L3, L4, and their successors. The Jelly Roll Morton recordings, the one important set of jazz "field" recordings in the Archive during the early 1940s (if we can call a set of recordings made in the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Auditorium "field recordings") were commercially viable and would thus come under the interdiction of number 3 below—as would, indeed, **most jazz**.

2. Since the purpose of the record series was to make the treasures of the Archive available to the general public, the choice of individual performances was made to some extent on the basis of beauty of performance rather than its use for folklore scholarship. These were the performances that the Lomaxes wanted to share with the world.

Not all of the performances are by otherwise unknown singers and instrumentalists caught for a brief moment by the microphone of the Library of Congress. Many are by people who even then were fairly well-known folk performers: Mrs. Texas Gladden, the salty radical Aunt Molly Jackson, honey-voiced Vera Hall, harmonica man Sonny Terry, and even Woody Guthrie. There are also less widely known musicians, from the anonymous little girls of "Ain't Gonna Ring [Rain?] No More" and the pseudonymous "Lightning"—who would not give John A. Lomax his real name—to such people as Jimmie Strothers, the gentle axe murderer who is known only through his Folk Archive recordings. But it cannot be claimed that every cut of L1 through L5 makes articulate a voice that would otherwise have remained unheard save by those living within a few miles of the singer. This is not to suggest that the early Library of Congress records sacrificed authenticity for easy listening. They are American folk music pure from the fount. Still, the newcomer to these records should be warned that Wade Ward, to give an example, is not the undiscovered hill-dweller of the cartoons ("Hey, Paw, here comes the man from the Library of Congress with that machine"). By 1942 he had already been broadcast nationwide on the American School of the Air.

3. The third assumption is the inverse of the second. It has been the policy of the Library of Congress not to compete in its publications with commercial companies. The recordings put out by the Folk Archive mirror this policy, none more clearly than the first six. The folk wisdom of the Music Division has it that in 1942 Lomax and Harold Spivacke, then chief of the Music Division, were advised that it might be unwise for the Library's record series to issue any record which could profitably be released commercially. Many of the well-known "Library of Congress recordings" that generations of record buyers have treasured have not, in fact, been released by the Library, but have been released on commercial labels from material recorded by or at the Library of Congress; thus the Archive has been able to get its treasures into circulation without competing with commercial record labels. A few highlights of commercial recordings made from material at the Library of Congress include the Jelly Roll Morton interviews

on Riverside, the Bartok-Szigeti recital on Vanguard, Blind Willie McTell on Piedmont, Aunt Molly Jackson on Rounder, Budapest String Quartet broadcasts on Odyssey, and the more or less complete works of Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter and Woody Guthrie on Elektra.

Few of the performances in the Folk Archive's collections in 1942 would have been considered to have commercial value in that year. Still, the attempt not to compete with regular record companies may explain why, in a series of records leaning heavily on black convict songs, there is nothing by the Lomax's most famous discovery, Leadbelly. By 1942 his recordings had appeared on the commercial market on more than one label.

What was not commercial in 1942 was not to be forever uncommercial. Several of the artists appearing on the Archive's first issues recorded commercially later (Sonny Terry, of L4, even shows up on the original cast album of *Finian's Rainbow*), and one, McKinley "Muddy Waters" Morganfield, who sings "Country Blues" and "I Be's Troubled" on L4, is now recognized as a major commercial artist with a considerable discography.

The first three attitudes discussed have concerned the general philosophy of the Library of Congress folk music recordings. The remaining considerations apply particularly to AFS L1 through L5 (L6, the Indian recording, being a special case).

4. The recordings are predominantly southern. The Lomax's collecting for the Library was done predominantly in the South; the South was thus the main source for the Library's folk collection. The first two albums, however, contained some material recorded in such nonsouthern locations as Rhinelander, Wisconsin, and Visalia, California, while the sixth album was recorded in New York and Ontario. So the records as they were issued proclaim their southern bias only by the note "recorded in Southern U.S." on L3 and L4.

The southern accent of the first Library of Congress recordings probably reflects the earliest experiences of the Lomax family, which began in Texas and spread east through the southern states, but it also reflects the practical necessities of folk-music collecting: better fish one section of the pond than spread your net too thin. (During their lives the Lomaxes, par-

ticularly Alan, were to spread their nets very widely indeed.) The next two aspects, interrelated, do represent the Lomax family's attitudes, attitudes widely shared among earlier folk music collectors but increasingly challenged by more recent collectors.

5. The sources of the recordings are exclusively rural.

6. The records are dedicated to the preservation of the old songs and styles of the folk, principally interpreted by older musicians, with little attempt to document the new styles and songs that were emerging. The next-to-last cut of L2, complete with Hawaiian guitar, for example, is offered as a single sample of "American folk music, 1942."

The view of the folksong as a rural and old, and therefore dying, art remains common to this day. In the 1940s there was a particular feeling that radio and the phonograph were wiping out our folk heritage, which was to be found in its most vital form where the electric power line had not—or had only recently—penetrated. At that time, a few folklorists were only beginning to discover the folk music of the city, with its multiple ethnic strains; and several of the new-fangled styles that the Lomaxes did not record are now respectable styles whose origins might well have shown up on these records.

A third of a century after their release we can see that the rural and old-style bias of the early Library of Congress folk music recordings provided something less than the full range of American folk music. From the perspective of the year they were released, however, they are an amazing document of taste, courage, and confidence. To have released in 1942 a record of Anglo-American ballads only two of which had the comforting accompaniment of a guitar was to invite instant rejection by the general listener, who usually likes his folk music with the harmonies explained. The faith of Alan Lomax and Harold Spivacke that the authentic voice of folk music could be accepted by the American people is, placed in proper perspective, far more important to consider than any "bias" the records might have. If today we note what the records omit it is partly because they have become so much the archetypal set of folk music records that one is conscious of their limits or, occasionally, unconscious. (The

present writer grew up in New Hampshire under the impression that New Hampshire had no folk music, since none of it appeared on Library of Congress records.)

7. "The labourer is worthy of his hire." The Library of Congress was careful to get permission from all locatable performers and to pay them for releasing their performances. The fee was nominal—around ten dollars per song—but for a series of records dedicated to commercial unacceptability (number 3 above) it was a pledge of faith to the artists whose work had been used. The efforts to locate singers were heroic; but sometimes even the U.S. government had to give up. A 1942 Alan Lomax memo, "Report on Clearances," tells many stories of his attempts to secure clearances, including this one about the Bahamas records:

One of the singers on this record lives on the remote Cat Island of the Bahamas chain. She was written on April 17, 1942, and so far no reply has been obtained; perhaps none ever will. The only other Bahaman singer who has been located was found because the Nassau postmaster published a notice in the newspaper announcing that he had a letter for him. There is no newspaper within 500 miles of Cat Island . . . Some people felt that ten dollars was not enough. Again, from the "Report on Clearances":

This party asked for a fifteen per-cent royalty; and so we have dropped the side, substituting an even better one by a performer who has been very cooperative in the past. A letter has gone to this performer, and a reply should be expected within a very few days.

If the first performer meant 15 percent of the profits by his request for a "fifteen per-cent royalty," he would have done better to stick with the ten dollars. But at least one performer was pleased with his payment. In a recent interview Muddy Waters recalled, "the Library of Congress sent me \$10.00 a side and that \$20.00 went a long way, as far as a hundred dollars goes today" (*Unicorn Times*, April 1978, p. 40). Sometimes denominational problems may have hindered the obtaining of permission:

These two items were recorded with the collaboration of three Negro ministers. After a month of correspondence, I discovered that it was necessary for all three to be consulted on the matter of the release of these two items. On May 8, 1942, I wrote all three again, explaining the situation; so far I have received no reply. I shall wire again today for a definite yes or no answer.

Apparently no answer was received, for another performance was substituted for the performances involving the three ministers' permission. The substituted piece was Willie Williams singing "The New Buryin' Ground": it is therefore hard to regret the ministers' recalcitrance.

Lomax summed up the trials of getting clearances for the first six albums of the Archive series at the end of this report:

This matter of locating a hundred old folk singers all the way from Cat Island to the Colorado buttes and back has been an epic chase. It is an experience that I have enjoyed but that I am not anxious to repeat soon. . . .

If Lomax was not anxious to repeat the experience soon, the Folk Archive was fully prepared to keep up its searches: the second set of six albums, under the general editorship of B. A. Botkin, appeared one year after the initial six. Eventually, the rigorous seeking of permissions became less exhaustive and exhausting. Payments are held in escrow for performers who appear at new locations after their performances are released.

The first six albums issued by the Archive of American Folk Song have become documents almost as much as the music they sought to preserve. They are still as capable as ever of giving pleasure, instruction, and sustenance to the listener who comes to them for the music they contain. By now, however, they also serve as witness to the state of folk-music collection in the 1930s—both as to the sound quality of the records produced and the attitudes toward collecting of the gatherers—and to the manner in which this material was presented to the general public in the 1940s.

Few people who care for folk music would suggest that these six albums be retired for obsolescence—though we do get about three letters a year suggesting that if we cannot issue records with better audio quality than these we should get out of the business, and an occasional letter suggesting that anyone who would put out a record entitled [fill in title of any one of the albums] without including an example of [fill in any currently fashionable folk-derived style] is guilty of deceiving the public. There have been suggestions, however, that we revise the printed material accompanying these records, either to bring it up to the current stand-

ards of ethnomusicological writing or to bring it in line with current racial attitudes. Against this proposal is the fact that most of the annotations on these records were made by the people who pointed the microphone at the singers and said "sing." This has seemed more germane to our purposes than folkloric or sociological up-to-dateness—what is up-to-date in the 1970s may be passé in the 1990s, but AAFS 1 through 6 will be 1933 through 1942 forever. So we have added this historical note and reproduced the original annotations substantially as they were written in 1942. They are still good reading; by now they are history as well.

ANGLO-AMERICAN SHANTIES, ETC.

A1—SALLY BROWN (Traditional Sea Shanty).

A2—HAUL AWAY, MY ROSY. (Traditional Sea Shanty).

Sung by J. M. (Sailor Dad) Hunt of Marion, Virginia. Recorded in Washington, D.C., by Alan Lomax, 1941.

Since the earliest days of sailing vessels, the old manuscripts say, sailors have cried out and halloed at their work as they hoisted sail and anchor. Sailor work songs are known in German, French, and Scandinavian; but it is to Great Britain, mistress of the seas, that there falls the honor for the greatest development of this type. Between 1820 and 1870, however, swift American ships began to dominate the seas; the American clippers were the fastest and most beautiful sailing vessels that man had ever made; and the British shanty was taken over and further brightened by American seamen.

Both of these songs are performed at a tempo actually much faster than is possible for men at work aboard ship. The first is a capstan or windlass shanty. The second is what is known as a "long haul shanty"—that is, a shanty song for hoisting the topsails. The pulls occur in "Haul Away, My Rosy" on the first "way" in each chorus line and on the word "Johnny-o."

For another version of "Sally Brown" and for general background on shanties see page 82 of Joanna C. Colcord, *Songs of American Sailormen* (W. W. Norton and Company, 1938); for a variant of A2 see page 41.

A1—SALLY BROWN

1. I shipped on board of a Liverpool liner,
'Way, hey, roll and go.
And we'll go all night and we'll go till
mornin',
I spend my money along with Sally Brown.
2. Sally Brown is a nice young lady.
3. She's tall and dark but not too shady.
4. Her mother don't like a tarry sailor.
5. She wants here to marry a one-legged
captain.

A2—HAUL AWAY, MY ROSY

1. Talk about your harbor girls around the
corner, Sally.
'Way, haul away, haul away, my Rosy,
'Way, haul away, haul away, my Johnny-O.
2. But they couldn't come to tea with the
girls from Booble Alley.
3. I once loved a French girl, but she was
fat and crazy.
4. With her "Parlez-vous, oui, oui, français"
she nearly drove me crazy.
5. King Louis was the king of France before
the Revolution.
6. But the people cut his head off, then he
lost his constitution.
7. We sailed away from Liverpool, bound for
the Gulf of Mexico.
8. We sailed into Galveston and loaded up
with cotton-o.
9. We loaded cargo there, my boys, then we
took it light and easy.

A3—PAY DAY AT COAL CREEK (Lament on a Mine Disaster).

Sung with five-string banjo by Pete Steele at Hamilton, Ohio, 1938. Recorded by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax.

Coal Creek, Tennessee, has been the scene of several mine disasters. This song, according to Pete Steele, celebrates the final closing of the mines—

"No more pay days at Coal Creek."

Pete Steele's performance marks a high point in the development of indigenous white folksong, a perfect blending of voice and instrument. While the banjo was originally a Negro instrument, the southern whites have so well adapted it to their musical style that it is now more typical of southern white than of southern Negro music.

For other miners' songs see G. G. Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1938). For this version see page 274 of John A. and Alan Lomax, *Our Singing Country* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1941).

1. Pay day, pay day, O pay day,
Pay day at Coal Creek tomorrow,
Pay day at Coal Creek tomorrow.
2. Pay day, pay day, O pay day,
Pay day don't come at Coal Creek no more,
Pay day don't come no more.
3. Bye-bye, bye-bye, O bye-bye,
Bye-bye, my woman, I'm gone,
Bye-bye, my woman, I'm gone.
4. You'll miss me, you'll miss me,
you'll miss me,
You'll miss me when I'm gone,
You'll miss me when I'm gone.
5. I'm a poor boy, I'm a poor boy,
I'm a poor boy,
I'm a poor boy and a long ways from home,
I'm a poor boy and a long ways from home,
6. He's a rider, O he's a rider, O he's a rider,
O he's a rider, but she'll leave that rail
some time,
O he's a rider, but she'll leave that rail
some time.

A4—THE LITTLE DOVE (White Spiritual).

Sung by Aunt Molly Jackson of Clay County, Kentucky. Recorded in New York City, 1939, by Alan Lomax.

One of the strictest conventions of Protestantism in rural America was its prohibition of all nonreligious music. Secular music was denounced as being worldly and belonging to flesh and the devil; and, ideally speaking, no respectable church member ever allowed himself to sing a ballad or a love song. If he were to be convicted of a serious disregard of this taboo, he was likely to lose his status as a respectable member of the community. Naturally the strictness of this taboo varied a good deal with the community and the time.

Due to this prohibition against ballads and love songs, the church folk created narrative and lyric songs for themselves, using many of the old secular tunes, but developing texts of proper religious content. Aunt Molly's "Little Dove" belongs to this class of songs. It is a love song which could be and was sung before the fireplaces of respectable religious families.

For another version and a note on this song see pages 63 ff., G. P. Jackson, *Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America* (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1937).

1. As I sat in a lonesome grove,
Sat o'er my head a little dove.
For its lost mate began to coo;
It made me think of my mate too.
2. "O little dove, you're not alone,
I was once like you constrained to mourn,
Once like you I had a mate,
But now like you I'm desolate.
3. "Consumption seized my lover dear
And lingered on for one long year,
Till death came at the break of day
And lovely Mary him' did slay.
4. "O death, grim death, did not stop there,
I had a babe to me most dear;
Death like a virtue² came again
And took from me my little Jane.
5. "She said to me: 'My dearest friend,
Go on, prove faithful to the end
And soar on high to that blessed shore,
There we will meet to part no more.'
6. "O hasten on the happy day,
When I must leave this clod of clay
And soar on high to that blessed plain;
There I'll meet Mary and my Jane."

¹ This word should be "he."

² Vulture.

A5—TEN THOUSAND MILES (Love Song).

Sung by Aunt Molly Jackson of Clay County, Kentucky. Recorded in New York City, 1939, by Alan Lomax.

Along with British ballads and the fiddle tunes, the United States also inherited a group of exquisite lyric songs which have been particularly popular in the southern United States. These love songs, perhaps more than the ballads, have been close to the hearts of the people and they have been further changed by their residence in this country. Without them, the Negro blues would never have grown as they have, nor would we have our present rich stock of contemporary "hill-billy" lyric songs. Aunt Molly's performance of this song, which tells of the parting of two lovers as the young man goes to the wars, is an American re-creation of various fragments of the British lyric tradition. Her performance is in the pure style of Kentucky mountain folk singing.

For reference, see page 113, Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appala-*

chians, vol. II (Oxford University Press, 1932); also page 380, H. M. Belden, *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk Lore Society* (University of Missouri, 1940).

1. "O fare you well, my darling,
O fare you well, my dear,
O fare you well, my darling;
I'm going to volunteer.
2. "I'm going to the army
To stay for a while,
So far from you, my darling;
It's about ten thousand miles.
3. "I will see the cannon
As they roll the wheels around;
I will fight for my country,
To the army I am bound.
4. "O do not wring your lily white hands,
O mournfully do not cry;
I'm going to the army,
Perhaps in the army die.
5. "I ask you not to grieve for me
And give your poor heart pain,
For if I live, my darling,
I'll return to you again.
6. "I'll return to you again, my love,
If I keep my life;
I'll come back to you, my love,
And you shall be my wife.
7. "Well-uh who will shoe your feet, my love?
Now who will glove your hand?
And who will kiss your rosy lips
While I'm in a distant land?"
8. "My father will shoe my feet, my love;
My mother will glove my hand.
And as for kissing my rosy lips,
There'll be no other man."
9. "O fare you well, my darling,
O fare you well, my dear.
Be true to me, my own sweetheart,
I'm bound to leave you here."

**A6—SOLDIER, WON'T YOU MARRY ME?
(Humorous Song).**

Sung with guitar by Russ Pike at Visalia, California, 1941. Recorded by Charles Todd and Robert Sonkin.

This satiric dialogue between a sophisticated soldier and a somewhat naive lady has been universally loved in this country, as in England, the country of its origin. Girl Scouts, isolated mountaineers, New England lumberjacks, college glee clubs—all sing it with equal enthusi-

asm; the "Okies," the wandering migratory workers of the Southwest, have carried it to the beet fields and orange groves of California.

For another version and background material on this song, see page 40, Sharp, *English Folk Songs*.

1. "O soldier, O soldier, won't you marry me
now,
To the beat of the fife and the drum?"
"O how can I marry such a pretty little miss
When I have no shoes to put on?"
2. Now she ran and she ran to the shoe store
As fast as she could run.
She brought back the very, very best,
And the soldier put it on.
3. "Soldier, O soldier, won't you marry me now,
To the beat of the fife and the drum?"
How can I marry such a pretty little miss
When I have no suit to put on?"
4. O she ran and she ran to the clothing store
As fast as she could run.
She brought back the very, very best,
And the soldier put it on.
5. "O soldier, O soldier, won't you marry me
now,
To the beat of the fife and the drum?"
"How can I marry such a pretty little miss
When I have no hat to put on?"
6. Well, she ran and she ran to the hat store
As fast as she could run.
She brought back the very, very best,
And the soldier put it on.
7. "Soldier, O soldier, won't you marry me now,
To the beat of the fife and the drum?"
"O how can I marry such a pretty little miss
When I have a wife at home?"

A7—JENNIE JENKINS (Dialogue Song).

Sung with guitar and mandolin by Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Ball at Rugby, Virginia, 1941. Recorded by Alan and Elizabeth

Rugby, Virginia, is not a town or even a village, but a community of mountain people, scattered among the folds of the green hills of southwest Virginia. One sunny afternoon last fall, I drove up one of its green valleys along a narrow road, looking for the home of the E. C. Balls. I did not have to be told that I had found the right house, because there on a front gallery were the two of them, singing together—Mr. Ball with his big guitar in his lap.

This song, of English origin, has been found in many parts of the United States. It is a song

of courtship. Often at rural entertainments of earlier days a pair of lovers would sing it together as a duet, to the great amusement and delight of their auditors.

For another version of this song see page 371, Sharp, *English Folk Songs*.

1. *Man:* Will you wear white, my dear,
O dear?

O will you wear white, Jennie
Jenkins?

Woman: I won't wear white,
For the color's too bright;
I'll buy me a foldy-roldy, tildy-toldy,
Seek a double use-a cause-a,
roldy binding.

Both: Roll, Jennie Jenkins, roll!

2. *Man:* Will you wear red, my dear, O dear?
O will you wear red, Jennie Jenkins?

Woman: I won't wear red,
For it's the color on my head;
Etc.

3. *Man:* Will you wear green, my dear,
O dear?

O will you wear green,
Jennie Jenkins?

Woman: I won't wear green,
For it's a shame to be seen;
Etc.

4. *Man:* Will you wear black, my dear,
O dear?

O will you wear black,
Jennie Jenkins?

Woman: I won't wear black,
For it's the color on my back;
Etc.

5. *Man:* Will you wear green, my dear,
O dear?

O will you wear green,
Jennie Jenkins?

Etc.

A8—FOD (Nonsense Song).

Sung with guitar and mandolin by Henry King at Visalia, California, 1941. Recorded by Charles Todd and Robert Sonkin.

A first love of any Anglo-American folk singer is the nonsense song, the song of contra-

diction, fancy, and foolishness. A typical line from a contemporary song runs,

"Her age it was black and her hair was
nineteen."

In "Fod" the fantasy has an almost surrealist character. A black snake bites our adventurer; he sits down on a stump, seeming to himself like a woodchuck. Then he *becomes* the woodchuck, playing a banjo. The woodchuck becomes embroiled with a skunk and their combined musty odor puts out the lamp at a dance that had never begun.

The King family came to California from Arkansas as migratory farm workers. They brought their instruments and their songs with them and, as they have travelled from farm to farm following the crops and entertaining their fellow "Okies," they have become a legend of fun and good cheer for their people.

For songs in similar minstrel style see Dorothy Scarborough, *On the Trail of Negro Folk Songs* (Harvard University Press, 1925), and Newman I. White, *American Negro Folk-Songs* (Harvard University Press, 1928).

1. As I went down to the mowin' field,
Hu-rye, tu-rye, fod-a-link-a-dye-do,
As I went down to the mowin' field,
Fod!

As I went down to the mowin' field,
A big black snake got me by the heel.
Tu rolly day.

2. Well, I fell down upon the ground,
I shut both eyes and looked all around.

3. I set upon a stump to take my rest;
It looked like a woodchuck on his nest.

4. The woodchuck grinned a banjo song,
And up stepped a skunk with the britches on.

5. The woodchuck and skunk got into a fight;
The fume was so strong it put out the light.

6. They danced and they played till the
chimney begin to rust;
It was hard to tell which smelt the worst.

A9—ROLL ON THE GROUND (Banjo Piece).

Sung with five-string banjo by Thaddeus C.

Willingham at Gulfport, Mississippi,

1939. Recorded by Herbert Halpert.

From Mississippi comes this typical five-string banjo song, part of a large family of such tunes found all the way from Maryland to Texas. This type of song is used for entertainment and for square dancing. The form is generally the same—a four-line stanza with a four-line chorus.

For songs of similar type, see Sharp, *English Folk Songs*.

CHORUS:

Roll on the ground, boys,

Roll on the ground;

Roll on the ground, boys,

Roll on the ground.

1. Work on the railroad,
Sleep on the ground,
Eat soddy crackers
And the wind blow 'em around.
Chorus.
2. Work on the railroad,
Work all the day,
Eat soddy crackers
And the wind blow 'em away.
Chorus.

The remainder of the song is a repetition of these two stanzas and the chorus.

B1—THE LAST OF CALLAHAN.

B2—THE WAYS OF THE WORLD.

B3—GLORY IN THE MEETINGHOUSE.

Played on the fiddle by Luther Strong at Dalesburg, Kentucky, 1937. Recorded by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax.

During the whole period of the settlement of America and the expansion of the frontier, the favorite musical instrument of the settlers was the violin or, as they called it, the fiddle. It was light and extremely portable. Its shrill voice could carry over the noise of any rough

country dance. It was well fitted to play the intricate and unorthodox traditional folk airs that were the heritage of the pioneers. It carried with it the richest musical tradition that came to America—a whole world of delightful English fiddle, Scotch bagpipe, and Irish piper airs.

The fiddler played in a distinctive fashion, holding the butt of the instrument against his chest, grasping the bow near the middle, moving his whole body as he played, often retuning his instrument completely when he began a new air. The fiddler and his instrument were both held in considerable awe by the frontier community, so little acquainted with music. There is a story of a little boy, who, on hearing the fiddle for the first time, ran out of the house and hid in a cave for two days, because he thought the devil had been let loose in the room.

"The Last of Callahan," like many other fiddle tunes, carries its own legend with it. It is said and told that Callahan was to be hung. His last request was that he be allowed to play his beloved fiddle as he stood on the scaffold with the rope about his neck. After he played this tune, he offered his fiddle to any man in the crowd who could perform the piece. He had played so brilliantly that no one dared to attempt it, whereupon he smashed the fiddle over the rump of the mule, and the wagon moved out from under his feet. Ever since, the tune has been called "The Last of Callahan."

For a transcription of "The Last of Callahan," see page 56 of John A. and Alan Lomax, *Our Singing Country* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1941). For background material, see Jean Thomas, *Devil's Ditties* (Chicago: Wilbur Hatfield, 1931).

B4—GRUB SPRINGS.

B5—THE EIGHTH OF JANUARY.

B6—TEXAS BELL.

B7—CINDY.

Played on the fiddle and sung by W. E. Claunch, accompanied by guitar at Gun-town, Mississippi, 1939. Recorded by Herbert Halpert.

For more than two centuries the most important form of recreation among white settlers has been the country dance or, as it is known variously, the square dance, the barn dance, or the breakdown. The fiddler with his lively stock of British and American dance tunes has always been the central figure. His partner was the prompter or "set-caller," who chanted the directions for the whirling dancers—

"Chicken in the bread tray, pickin' up dough,

Meet your partner and do-si-do."

The dance generally lasted from sunset to midnight. Sometimes in country communities where dances were rare, because the people were seldom able to come together from their scattered farms or ranches, the dances would last all night long. There is the yarn of a Texas square dance that lasted for a week. The occasion was the arrival of an itinerant fiddler in a community where there had not been any music for several years. The people came in shifts for a week, driving their buckboard wagons from ranches within a circle of a hundred miles. The poor fiddler only knew one tune, and he had to play it over and over the whole week long.

For a time, during the first years of this century, the square dance went out of vogue; but it has now begun to reestablish itself everywhere and, though not so common as it once was, is yet known in every part of the United States.

For background material see Elizabeth Burchenal, *American Country Dances* (G. Schirmer, New York, 1918); Captain Francis O'Neill, *O'Neill's Irish Rose* (Chicago: Lyon and Healy, 1915); Beth Tolman and Ralph Page, *The Country Dance Book* (Boston: E. C. Schirmer, 1937); Elias Howe, *Musical Omnibus* (New York: F. Blume, 1863).

B7—CINDY

Once I had a pretty girl,
Whose name was Katy Brown.
Everywhere Katy went,
I was hangin' around.

Kiss me, girl!
Kiss me again!
Now hug my neck!
O——! I'm holdin' on!

Kiss me, girl!
Kiss me again!
O——! I'm holdin' on!

B8—OLD JOE CLARK.

B9—CHILLY WINDS.

Played on five-string banjo by Wade Ward at Galax, Virginia, 1939. Recorded by Pete Seeger and Alan Lomax.

B10—CRIPPLE CREEK.

Played on five-string banjo by Herbert Smoke at Winchester, Virginia, 1940. Recorded by Alan Lomax.

B11—COAL CREEK MARCH.

Played on five-string banjo by Pete Steele at Hamilton, Ohio, 1938. Recorded by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax.

The history of the provenience of the banjo is one of the most interesting stories in the history of American folksong. The instrument itself is an Afro-American development, later adopted and popularized by the black-face minstrel shows which, during the whole of the nineteenth century, carried it over the United States. It became quite a fashionable instrument in the latter part of the nineteenth century and highly complex compositions and arrangements were made for it. Some time after the middle years of the century it was introduced into the southern mountain area along with a large number of the minstrel tunes that were adapted to the instrument. For a half century thereafter the banjo ranked with the fiddle as the most typical instrument of the southern mountain region. On the contrary it is rare these days to discover a Negro banjo played anywhere in the South. The mountain style of banjo playing is a folk development and the songs composed for it by mountain virtuosos represent an important area of growth for American folk music.

B12—JOHN HENRY (Square Dance).

Played by Wallace Swann and his Cherokee String Band, with square dancing at Asheville Folk Festival, Asheville, North Carolina, 1941. Recorded by Alan Lomax.

In the last fifteen years, as the radio reached the most remote districts with symphony orchestras and with highly arranged jazz, the people have made a radical departure from their old-fashioned musical styles. In the place of the unaccompanied song or fiddle tune, they have adapted the guitar, the electric guitar, the bass fiddle, the piano and even the trumpet to their favorite melodic styles. In competition with hot

jazz, their dances have become faster in tempo. They have learned to play in small instrumental ensembles. They have made many songs which, in the matter of sentimentality, have the same attraction as the popular songs of the city. This whole field of folk-popular music is known as "hill-billy." The present record of a contemporary folk performance in this style was made on the stage of a mountain folk festival in Asheville, North Carolina, during a square dance competition. The participants were all young; the musicians, using two guitars (one of them electric) and a banjo, were young. In the foreground one can hear the roar of the dancers and the cheers of the crowd. This is American folk music, 1942.

B13—THE TRAIN (Harmonica Solo).

Played on the harmonica by Chub Parham with clogging at Asheville Folk Festival, Asheville, North Carolina, 1941. Recorded by Alan Lomax.

For the past forty years the people have regarded the black smoking railroad train as heroic. The train provided a means of escape from an environment that was too narrow; it was a symbol of freedom and strength. In the blues, in jazz, in modern spirituals, in "hill-billy" music, one is constantly being reminded of the train—its rhythm colors text and accompaniment. This record is a rendition of a descriptive piece about the train for the harmonica that is known by both Negro and white musicians. The train is represented as rushing across the countryside in the lonesome night, blowing its whistle, roaring over bridges, saying "hello" and "good-bye" to the restless heart of America.

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