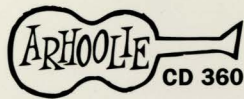


1. LEAVING MEMPHIS, 'FRISCO BOUND
 2. GOT A DATE AT HALF PAST EIGHT
 3. HUMP IN MY BACK
 4. FLAVOR IN MY CREAM
 5. FINGER TWISTER
 6. JUST LIKE A SHIP ON THE DEEP BLUE SEA
 7. CINCINATI BLUES
 8. JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE
 9. MOTHERLESS CHILDREN
 10. AMAZING GRACE
 11. HARK FROM THE TOMB
 12. AS LONG AS I CAN FEEL THE SPIRIT
 13. I'M GOING TO SIT DOWN AT THE WELCOME TABLE (*)
 14. TOGETHER LET US LIVE (*)
 15. MEMPHIS BOOGIE (*)
 16. FOOTDELLA STOMP (*)
 17. CRAZY ABOUT A WOMAN
 18. 99 YEARS
 19. STRANGER'S BLUES
 20. BILL BAILEY WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME
 21. PREACHER LOWDOWN
 22. SAN FRANCISCO BAY BLUES
- Total time - 65:24



Jesse Fuller - vocals, guitar, harmonica, kazoo, and footdella

(*) = previously unissued

#1-12 previously issued on Arhoolie 2009 and recorded in San Francisco, Ca. on April 22, 1955 by Tom Spinosa, James Salemi, and Norman Pierce and first issued on the Cavalier label, on both 10" and later 12" LP.

#13-16 previously unreleased from the Cavalier/Arhoolie session

#17-22 recorded at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY in November 1962 by Jerry Goodwin and produced by Harry Oster, originally issued on Folklyric LP 126.

Cover photo: Berkeley Folk Music Festival/ Phillip Olivier.

Cover by Wayner Pope.

Re-issue for CD release produced by Chris Strachwitz

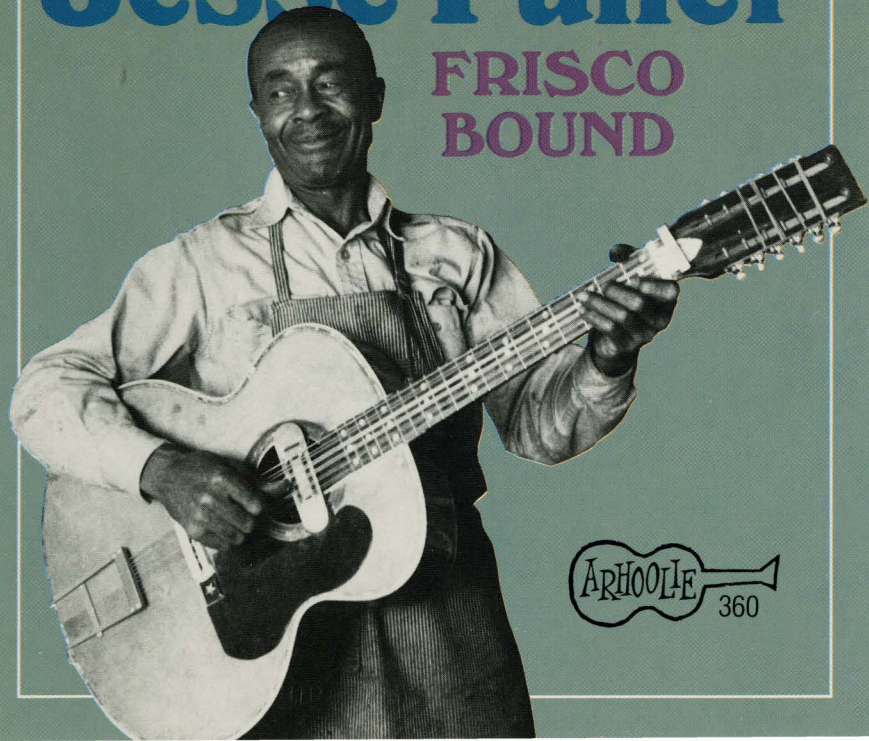
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Jesse Fuller

FRISCO BOUND





Jesse Fuller was a remarkably expressive singer, a fine 12-string guitar player and a highly versatile entertainer who drew on most of the strands of the Black folk tradition, Blues, Ragtime, the minstrel show, Tin Pan Alley, church music and Jazz. He was born on March 12, 1896 in Jonesboro, Georgia. He never knew his father and was orphaned at age eight when his mother died. He was left with the Wilson family, near Macedonia, Georgia, who, Jesse remembered, treated him "mean, like a dog." But the young boy had a tough will to survive and at the age of nine hired himself out to graze cows for ten cents a day. Later, he worked in a barrel factory, next a broom factory near Marietta, then a rock quarry near Macon. As a young teenager he hauled lumber for a saw-mill and drove spikes on a railroad gang.

Meanwhile, beginning when he was ten years old, he started to pick up blues guitar around Stockbridge and McDonough. Like many other boys he made himself a crude guitar and imitated the sounds he heard at the rough Saturday night dances. Although he rejected religion at an early age, he listened attentively and caught the spirit and style of church-goers and blind street spiritual singers. He eventually traded a bicycle for his first guitar.

Heading for Cincinnati, he worked for a street car company until he was offered a more exciting job and better paying job with a circus setting up tents. Although the circus only paid him \$6.00 a week, never the promised \$ 15.00, he enjoyed the constant travel and stayed on for six months. During World War I , (1914-17), Jesse traveled to Alabama where he worked on the huge Muscle Shoals power project. There he met a wide profusion of singers, guitarists and jug bands among the thousands of workers and certainly learned a great deal from hearing them. Just after the war, when he was passing through Grand Rapids, Michigan, Jesse played for some soldiers and was astounded at collecting over eighty dollars by passing the hat! The experience convinced him that a respectable amount of money could be made playing the guitar and singing. So, Jesse kept playing, singing and wandering.

"I knew I was gonna hit California some time an' I didn't care when. I never paid any money - but I've done lots of ridin'. I could catch trains running thirty miles an hour with my guitar strapped behind my back, leaving guys standing there looking at me, saying 'I wonder how in the name of God that fellow caught that train!' And I can swing off a train at forty miles an hour! Every time I'd hit a railroad division I'd go amongst the store people and play a song. There wasn't any radios in them days. They'd fill my cap up."

Jesse rode the Union Pacific, Rock Island Line and Western Pacific across the country. Eventually, when he got to Los Angeles, he gleaned a living by shining shoes, washing cars, and carving and selling wooden snakes. With the help of actor Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., Jesse opened a hot dog stand at a movie studio and appeared as an extra in several films, **The Thief of Baghdad** among them. Occasionally Fairbanks would hire Jesse to entertain at parties on Fairbanks' estate for which Jesse was paid and treated well. When the movie business was slack, Jesse traveled north to Bakersfield where he found seasonal work picking cotton.

In 1929 Jesse headed for Oakland where he landed a job as a laborer on the Southern Pacific Railroad. During World War II he was a welder in the Oakland ship yards. He also shined shoes, worked as a lumberjack or farm laborer, and played his guitar on the street.

In 1951 Jesse decided to try playing music for his living. Seeing other musicians making what seemed to him to be spectacular amounts of money from performing and recording convinced him to give it a try. Initially he set about forming a band but found a definite lack of dedication and cooperation among the other players. His solution was to learn to perform as a one man band. With his typical ingenuity, he invented an accompaniment instrument his wife named a "footdella." The footdella was shaped like the top half of a string bass and it stretched out in front of him as he sat, its oversize pedals under his feet, piano hammers making contact with the strings. Each of the six heavy strings had a foot lever, a padded hammer and a damper, like a piano. When his stocking foot hit

a hammer, the hammer hit a string and the damping bar would drop to allow the string to sound. When Jesse lifted his foot from the hammer lever, the damper would stop the string from vibrating and sounding. He amplified the footdella and also had an additional gadget attached - a set of ratchets scraped by a lever - that gave the effect of rhythm played on a washboard. You can hear Jesse play the footdella on several of the selections on this CD.

During the 1950s and 1960s Jesse acquired an enthusiastic following at folk clubs and festivals and recorded extensively, principally for Good Time Jazz. He successfully toured Europe and the US college circuit with his guitar, harmonica, kazoo and footdella and his *San Francisco Bay Blues* became a very popular standard among urban folk revivalists. His vast repertoire of blues, ragtime, children's songs, railroad songs, spirituals, waltzes and jazz made him a true entertainer and songster. "The Lone Cat," as he called himself, loved traveling around the country in his station wagon, and he often slept in it along with his instruments. In between tours he lived in Oakland, California until his death on January 29, 1976. Jesse Fuller left us a great legacy of very powerful personal music, some of the earliest of which is presented on this CD.

Notes by Harry Oster (edited in 1991 by Dix Bruce)

Jesse Fuller was one of the first blues singer/songsters I ever met and taped with my primitive recorder in the early 1950s. As a friend and I passed San Francisco's Tin Angel on the Embarcadero, we heard a remarkable and eerie sound. The George Lewis band from New Orleans was supposed to be appearing that week. It was a Monday however, the band's night off, and instead we witnessed the amazing music of Jesse Fuller, who had stopped by to "audition"! I later visited Jesse many times at his home in Oakland and heard him play innumerable times for customers at his shoe shine stand on College Avenue.

Goldsmith Records of Berkeley, Ca. (I believe Mr. Goldsmith was an engineer

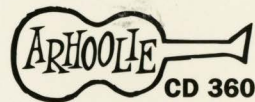
at KPFA radio) produced Jesse Fuller's very first recording, a 10" LP entitled **Working on the Railroad** on the World Song label and it included the first recording of Jesse's soon to become very popular *San Francisco Bay Blues*. Selections # 1-16 of this CD come from Jesse's second commercial recording session and include several haunting church hymns played with a knife on 12-string guitar. These recordings were made in 1955 and first issued on Tom Spinoza's Cavalier label. In the 1960s Arhoolie purchased all the tapes from this session, including the previously unreleased instrumentals featuring Jesse's "footdella." Selections # 17-22 are the best songs from a Folklyric LP produced by Dr. Harry Oster in the early 1960s including a nice version of *San Francisco Bay Blues*.

My last visit with Jesse Fuller was in the Fall of 1975 when I drove him to San Francisco where he made a rather emotional appearance singing his *San Francisco Bay Blues* at Tom Mazzolini's annual San Francisco Blues Festival. Jesse had suffered a stroke and was unable to play his beloved guitar or footdella. It was to be his last public appearance ending a remarkable career by one of the Bay Area's most beloved and respected folk musicians. (Chris Strachwitz - 1991)



Jesse Fuller

"FRISCO BOUND"



Over 60 Minutes of Classic BLUES

1. LEAVING MEMPHIS, FRISCO BOUND (5:16)
2. GOT A DATE AT HALF PAST EIGHT (2:34)
3. HUMP IN MY BACK (3:09)
4. FLAVOR IN MY CREAM (2:44)
5. FINGER TWISTER (2:48)
6. JUST LIKE A SHIP ON THE
DEEP BLUE SEA (2:08)
7. CINCINNATI BLUES (5:06)
8. JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE (2:30)
9. MOTHERLESS CHILDREN (3:02)
10. AMAZING GRACE (1:45)
11. HARK FROM THE TOMB (3:22)
12. AS LONG AS I CAN FEEL THE SPIRIT (2:22)
13. I'M GOING TO SIT DOWN AT
THE WELCOME TABLE (2:54) (*)
14. TOGETHER LET US LIVE (1:58) (*)
15. MEMPHIS BOOGIE (2:47) (*)
16. FOOTDELLA STOMP (2:30) (*)
17. CRAZY ABOUT A WOMAN (3:00)
18. 99 YEARS (3:12)
19. STRANGER'S BLUES (4:34)

20. BILL BAILEY WON'T YOU
PLEASE COME HOME (2:35)
21. PREACHER LOWDOWN (2:08)
22. SAN FRANCISCO BAY BLUES (3:37)

Total Time - 68:05

(*) = previously unissued

Jesse Fuller - vocals, guitar, harmonica,
kazoo and footdella.

Jesse Fuller (1896-1976), "The Lone Cat," was a remarkably expressive singer and fine 12-string guitar player. A versatile entertainer, Jesse usually performed as a "one man band" and drew on most strands of the rich Afro-American folk tradition. Born and raised in Georgia, he hoboed all over the country singing and working various jobs until he settled in Oakland, Ca. His best known composition, *San Francisco Bay Blues*, is included in this collection along with some haunting slide guitar solos.

CD-360



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