

"Songmaker of the Catskills"

GRANT ROGERS of Walton, New York

Recorded and edited by Sandy Paton

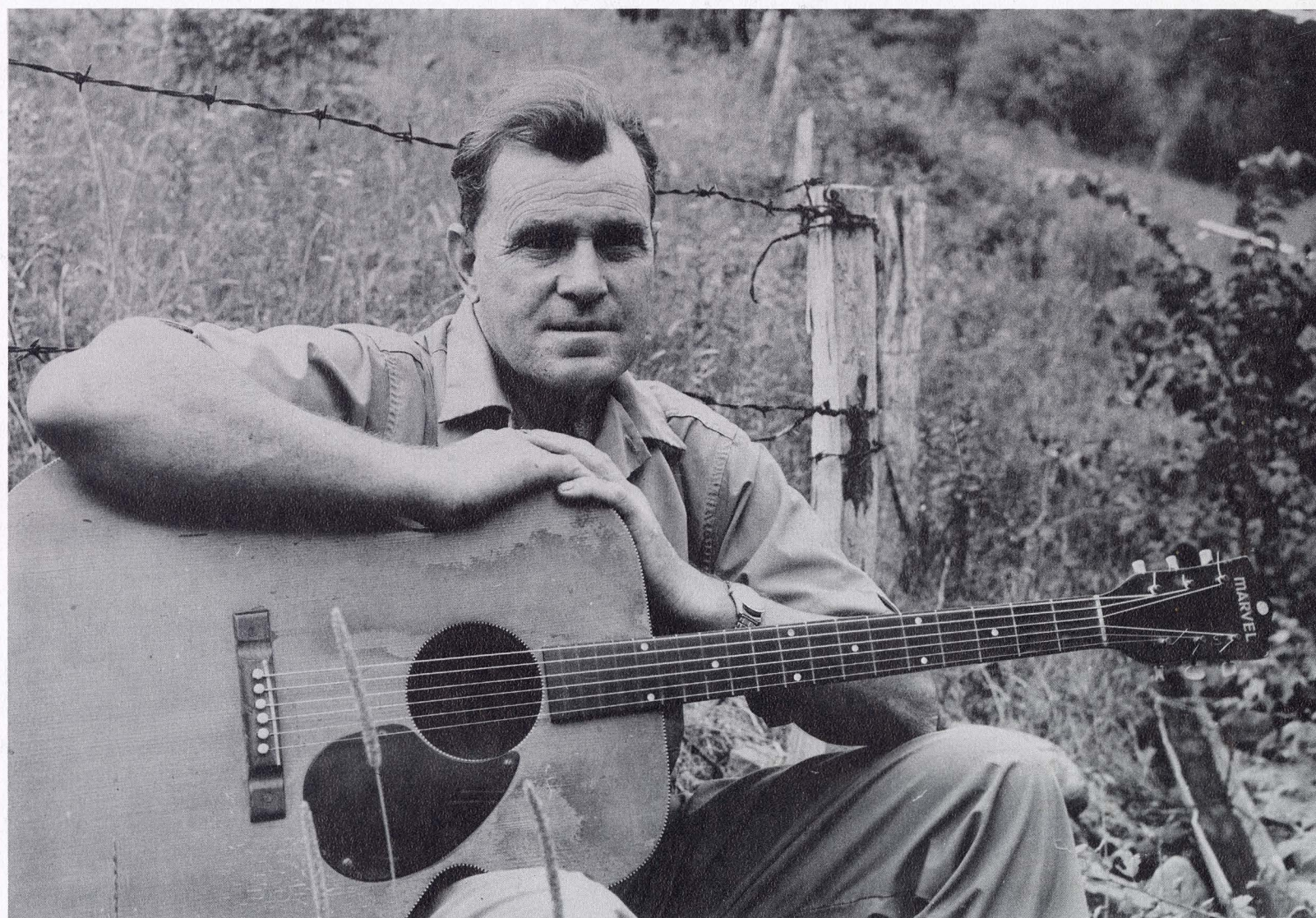


PHOTO BY SANDY PATON



FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC. SHARON, CONNECTICUT

*"Songmaker of the Catskills"***GRANT
ROGERS** of Walton,
New York*Recorded and edited by Sandy Paton*

Grant Rogers stands as living proof that the art of song-making still thrives, not only in Greenwich Village, but among the folk themselves. A stone-cutter by trade, Grant has been making up songs for over forty years. A few of Grant's songs are reconstructions of traditional material, but most of them are wholly his own compositions. He has also composed a number of fiddle tunes, which is not surprising, considering the fact that he has been a traditional fiddler since he was six years old.

Grant Rogers was born in Walton some fifty-eight years ago. He went to work after finishing grade school, but his education has never stopped. He reads during much of his spare time, history being his favorite subject. As his wife, Edna (whose real name is Doris, although Grant calls her "Banes"), puts it: "He's historied me to death!" Following his departure from the confines of formal education, Grant worked at many occupations, among them masonry, general construction, timber-cutting in the logging camps, and various jobs in the saw-mills of the North woods. Eventually he settled into stone-cutting in the rock quarries near his home town and it is at this he has spent most of his working life. I once asked Grant if he knew any "other folksingers" around his area whom I might record and was brought up short. "I'm not a folksinger," he told me. "What are you, then?" I asked. "Why," he replied, "I'm a stone-cutter that makes up songs!" Deciding to pursue this distinction further, I asked, "What is a folksinger, then?" "You know," Grant answered without hesitation, "one of them fellers like Burl Ives or Pete Seeger!"

I don't like to argue with any man who seems to know so well just who and what he is, but I believe that Grant Rogers is a folksinger, creating new songs in much the same tradition as did Larry Gorman and Joe Scott, two earlier North woods song-makers and satirists. That there are few traditional songs in Grant's repertoire, and most of those reworked to suit his own fancy, should matter only to the die-hard academician. Grant Rogers creates songs under the cultural imperative of the tradition into which he was born; the songs ring true. Any definition so restrictive as to deny Grant the title of folksinger would seem to me to be unrealistic, for the folk are still making up good songs, and Grant Rogers is making up some of the best.

S. P.

Side 1:

WHEN A FELLOW IS OUT OF A JOB
TALES OF MY GRANDAD
CANNONVILLE DAM
BULLSEYE BILL
ROGERS' HORNPIPE (fiddle)
LEGEND OF SLIDE MOUNTAIN
THREE NIGHTS DRUNK (Child 274)
LARRY O'GAFF (fiddle)
THE BACHELOR'S REPLY
IT'S A WONDER
DOWN BY THE RAILROAD TRACK
KITTY SHARP (fiddle)

Side 2:

PAT McBRAID
GRAVY AND BREAD
BESSIE, THE HEIFER
AT THE END OF JIMMY'S BAR
THE BOLD SOLDIER
WILLIE DOWN BY THE POND
THE CANADIAN ROSE (fiddle)
THE BUTCHER'S BOY
FREIGHT #1262
A PLACE CALLED HELL
THE LITTLE RED BARN (fiddle)

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GRANT ROGERS

**Recorded and with notes by
Sandy Paton**

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GRANT ROBERTS

Revised and enlarged by

John R. Roberts

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GRANT ROGERS

Grant Rogers' neat trailer home, with its comfortable front porch and well groomed lawn, rests against the wooded slope of a hill by Wakeman Brook, not far from Walton, New York. Directly across the gravel road are several stacks of flagstones which Grant has cut from native rock into proper slab form. He does this during his spare time and sells the finished product for a little additional income. A short distance from his home, work crews are completing the new highway which circles the area soon to become the reservoir of the Cannonsville Dam.

Grant and his wife, Edna, had to move out of the valley when this project got underway. In fact, the small town of Rock Rift, where Edna was born, is soon to be inundated by the waters backed up by the dam. The reservoir will supply water to New York, primarily, although Grant has heard that some of it will also benefit New Jersey and, possibly, part of Northern Pennsylvania. Most of the people who have been forced to leave their valley homes are reconciled to the change. Grant and Edna are not immune to the sentiment one feels for one's lifetime home, but they have accepted the pressures of progress philosophically. Grant has expressed his own attitude very effectively in his song entitled "Cannonsville Dam" (Side I; Band 3). Perhaps, if one were to listen to this song, on the one hand, and to "A Place Called Hell" (Side II; Band 10), on the other, one could gain an insight into the nature of this remarkable Catskill Mountain man.

Grant is a burly, barrel-chested guy, with rugged features and, not surprisingly, the rough hands of a stone-cutter. He is also a very sensitive man, perceptive and compassionate. He is possessed of a delightfully droll wit and a sense of satire which, while biting and penetrating, never slips into the ugly mire of maliciousness. Combined with these traits, one finds in Grant Rogers a chronic intellectual curiosity which has led him to read continuously since he left school after completing only the first eight grades and has developed in him a strong urge to examine independently every idea he comes across, from religion to the common myths of history. Grant reads a great deal of history, especially ancient history which is his favorite subject. As Edna puts it, "He's historied me to death!"

Edna's real name, by the way, is Doris, although Grant calls her "Baines". "I don't know why," she told me; "if I did, I'd probably shoot him!" When I asked Grant about it, he gave me this as an answer: "I tried to explain it to her once, but half-way through I forgot what it was I was trying

to explain. It seems to me as though I saw that word in the encyclopedia one time and it meant something big — not because she's big, you understand (which she is not) — but it meant something important!" When they were courting, Grant used to call her "Saccharin". For a time, he took an awful lot of teasing about this from the fellows with whom he was working. Finally, he told them to look it up in the dictionary. "They stopped kidding me," he says, "when they found out it meant 'four hundred times sweeter than sugar'!" This entire paragraph should not be considered a purely irrelevant aside; it has been included as an attempt to show another facet of Grant's character — that which reflects the sparkle of whimsy so often demonstrated in his songs.

Grant was born in Walton, New York, some fifty-eight years ago. After leaving school, he learned the mason's trade and worked on various construction jobs for a time, bricklaying, stuccoing, plastering, etc., traveling around New York and New Jersey, locating work wherever it was available. When this kind of work was not to be found, he went into the lumber-camps and the sawmills. One year, he and a friend drifted as far south as Georgia where Grant got a job as a fire-patrol in the pine forests. Soon he was back home, however, working in the rock quarries of the Catskills. This, it turned out, was to be his major occupation, for he has been working at it most of the time since his marriage. Typically, Grant puts it this way: "As the years went by, coming up here to see my sister, I run into Edna. I guess that's what kept me here. She wouldn't let me go back!" Edna, on the other hand, is quick to point out that they went together for three years before they were married. "So, you see, he had that long to get away, if he'd wanted to." They were married on the 29th of February in a Leap Year, so they've only celebrated seven anniversaries. Grant just chuckles when Edna insists that the fact that it was a Leap Year had nothing whatsoever to do with their getting married. This kind of affectionate banter goes on continuously, it would seem, leaving one with the distinct impression that these two people really enjoy exchanging tit-for-tat, always in fun and always secure in their love for one another.

By the time Grant was seven years old, he was sufficiently adept on the fiddle to play along with his elders at local square dances throughout the Delaware River valley. As he describes it, "Well, they used to stand me up on a chair and I'd fiddle right along with the caller there. I probably didn't do it like some of the older fellows there, but they thought it was all right. Maybe they was just trying to help me out, I don't know." At that time, of course, Grant was learning all of his tunes by ear from the other fiddlers and many of these tunes are still a part of his repertoire. Later, he decided that he ought to learn to read music. To quote Grant again:

"I'd hear one fellow fiddle a tune and maybe I'd hear another guy fiddle the same tune, but I could hear a difference in there. One guy didn't fiddle that tune like the other one did. So, I figured something was crazy there. Maybe I wasn't doing it either. Maybe I was fiddling it different from either one of the two. So, I thought the best way to eliminate this was to learn to read music. And so I did. I found an Italian fellow (Russian, according to Studer's article in SING OUT! - ed. note) who was willing to teach me. That got me started. Later on, I took a correspondence course in music for awhile. Anyhow, I learned. That way, you see, I could learn the tunes right out of the fiddle books. So, after I could read music, I thought to myself, 'Well, if you can read this here stuff, why can't you write it?' That was when I started writing all these songs and fiddle tunes."

As for writing songs, Grant says: "Sometimes when, if you're like me, you're sitting around alone, maybe thumbing around on the guitar, you know, maybe humming something and chording it with yourself. Well, them things will eventually go into words. You get some melody that you've never heard before, something just out of your imagination, well, anything like that should have a few lyrics to it. And that's what happens. Then you've got yourself a song."

"I started playing guitar around 1926 or '27, back in there somewhere. The first guitar I bought, I bought in Georgia off of a colored fellow. I never made any music while I was down there, myself, but I used to stand around at night, in the shadows, and listen to them other guys play. They played guitar and banjo. Some of them were really good, too."

"Music's always been just a hobby with me. You know why? I guess it's because I never got nowhere with it. Oh, I did play for awhile, about a year, with a little string band on the radio in Liberty. We called ourselves the 'Delaware County Ramblers'. Mostly, I just played the fiddle with them. They had a main vocalist, so I'd only sing a song once in a while. It didn't amount to much."

As a matter of fact, it did amount to something, for Grant became well enough known in the area as a fine traditional fiddler that, in 1950, Norman Studer invited him to come to Camp Woodland, of which Studer was the director, and perform for the campers there. Grant explains it this way: "Norman Studer used to come around looking for talent, you know, fiddlers, anybody that was capable of entertaining. And he got to scouting around a bigger and bigger area, farther away. Well, he got into my country and found out about me. So, I started going over there. It was about seventy miles from here, but Studer went even farther than this, looking for talent. Most

of them were fiddlers and singers like me, not really professionals. The nearest to a professional I ever saw over there was Pete Seeger. He liked my song 'When a Fellow is Out of a Job'. He asked me if he could sing it and I said 'Sure'. It was really funny, the way that happened. When he got to making the record, he called me up, long-distance, and I gave him the words over the telephone. He made a few little changes in it, you know, but he got it mostly the way I sang it. I used to go back over to the camp every summer until 1963. It changed hands then, you see.

"I first met Norman Cazden at the camp, too. Now he can really write music! I've sat and marveled, looking at music he's written down. Now, I can write music, you know, with a pen, but, by golly, to write it as nice as he does, well, it's wonderful to see. And he can write down a tune while you're humming it. I can't do that!"

I believe it was Norman Cazden who first suggested that I visit and record Grant Rogers, although Joe Hickerson was also enthusiastic in his recommendation. At any rate, I am grateful to both of them for bringing Grant Rogers to the attention of Folk-Legacy Records.

My own collecting experience has led me to believe that many so-called "carriers of tradition" from whom collectors have gathered remnants of British song-lore could just as easily have sung a few compositions of their own, had they ever been asked to do so. Unfortunately, the average folksong collector usually makes it quite clear, immediately upon his arrival at a singer's home, that he is looking for "old love songs" or "song ballets", or something of that sort, and the cooperative informant tries to give him exactly what he wants. I am convinced that, should collectors entertain fewer preconceptions as to what they will find being sung or played in a given folk-community and, at the same time, accept less restrictive definitions as to what exactly constitutes a "folksong", our store of native American balladry would be much larger and richer through the inclusion of the songs of other "folksong-makers", which is what I consider Grant Rogers to be — and a darned good one, too.

My own feelings about Grant have been stated so well by Norman Studer in the closing paragraph of his article in SING OUT! (Vol. 12, No. 3) that I would like to quote him here, in full. "Grant Rogers is testimony to the vitality of our regional traditions. He stems from the raftsmen and woodsmen of the Delaware Valley, and his music would not be (properly) understood unless it were seen against the backdrop of the narrow river valleys and the endless mountain ridges. It is not a static tradition, embalmed in its own past, but a live and

changing thing, growing with the changes that come to the mountains in which he has his roots."

Sandy Paton
Huntington, Vermont
September, 1965

Side I; Band 1. WHEN A FELLOW IS OUT OF A JOB

"I worked for a construction company in Hackensack, New Jersey, one time, and there used to be a colored fellow there named John Barnes. He pronounced his name 'Barness', but the way it was spelled was Barnes. Well, he used to sing that song a lot and I asked him about it. I said, 'John, where did that song come from?' Well, he didn't know where he had got it. It was something he had learned from the time he was a child, you know. So, I put my own music to it, because this guy, he couldn't carry a tune. He'd sing it today with one kind of a melody, you know, and tomorrow he'd sing it with some other melody. So, I got quite a lot of the words of it from him. Oh, I might have added a verse or two, you know, and I wrote the melody to suit myself. I never figured it would be recorded, of course. That's the one Pete Seeger put on a record."

All nature is sick, from her heels to her hair,
When a fellow is out of a job;
She's all out of kilter, beyond all repair,
When a fellow is out of a job.
Ain't no juice in the earth, no salt in the sea,
No ginger in life in this land of the free,
And the universe ain't what it's cracked up to
be,
When a fellow is out of a job.

What's the good of blue skies, blossoming trees,
When a fellow is out of a job;
And your kids have big patches all over their knees,
And a fellow is out of a job?
Them patches you see will cover the sky,
They'll blot out the landscape and cover your
eye;
And the sun can't shine through, well, the best
it may try,
When a fellow is out of a job.

When a man has no part of the work on this earth
And a fellow is out of a job,
He starts in to cussing the day of his birth,
When a fellow is out of a job.

He feels he's no share in the whole of the
plan,

He's got the old mitten from Nature's own hand
And he's truly rejected, a leftover man,
When a fellow is out of a job.

Every man that's a man wants to help push the world,
But he can't, if he's out of a job;
He's left out behind, on the shelf he is curled,
When a fellow is out of a job.

Ain't no juice in the earth, no salt in the sea,
No ginger in life in this land of the free,
And the universe ain't what it's cracked up to
be,

When a fellow is out of a job.

Side I; Band 2. TALES OF MY GRANDAD

"My Grandad was filled with all these yarns, you know.
He'd tell yarns about animals in the woods and all such things,
you know, like the old guys used to tell years back; maybe
about hunting panthers, cougars, we call 'em, in the woods or
running out at night with a light to chase the bears away from
the pig-pen.

"The idea of the song is, well, a lot of grandfathers will
tell, like to their grandchildren, more or less fantastic stories.
You know, they get 'em on their knee and tell 'em things. I
heard of one grandfather who was a veteran of the First World War
or maybe the Spanish-American War or some such thing. Anyhow,
he was telling all about it to one of his grandchildren when the
little boy spoke up and says, 'Well, Grandad, what did they use
the rest of the army for?' Well, there's 'Tales of My Grandad'."

When I was just a little boy,
One thing I did desire,
To sit upon my Grandad's knee
And watch the open fire
And listen to the tales he told
That happened long ago.
There was not a badman in the West
My Grandad didn't know.

When he was boss of the wagon train
A-heading 'cross the plains,
He met a band of highwaymen
With their leader, Jesse James.
My Grandad walked right up to them;
To Jesse he did say,
"If you all don't wish to be buzzard meat,
You'd better be on your way.

"So, don't give me no argument,
Just button up your jaw;
There's not a man in your whole clan
I can't beat to the draw."
When Jesse saw his lightning move,
A six-gun in each hand,
He set the pace at a mad race
Never to return again.

The only recruit in Custer's troops,
In duty he was sworn,
And without help he saved his scalp
In the Battle of Little Bighorn.
He told about the Dalton boys,
Cole Younger and his men;
There was not a lawman to be found
Would face just one of them.

When pleasure bound, my Grandad
Would ride from town to town.
For miles ahead, it has been said,
Not an outlaw could be found.
Billy the Kid took to the hills,
In his hideout he would stay;
In fear of his life, he left his wife
Till Grandad rode away.

Up in the hills was said to be
A great big grizzly bear.
The hunters refused to track him down,
He gave them such a scare.
But early one Sunday morning,
Just as nimble as a cat,
My Grandad danced down Main Street
With this dead bear on his back.

Poor old Grandad, his time has come
To bid farewell to all;
An empty chair left standing there,
His picture on the wall.
I'm sure the man who tends the gate
Will proudly let him by,
So he can tell his stories
To the Big Man in the sky.

Side I; Band 3. CANNONSVILLE DAM

"We heard rumors of that project for quite a few years. Rumors like, well, someday they'll probably build a dam or reservoir right in this section. Well, the rumors were true. They started moving people out of the valley about three years ago. They got evacuation notices, you know, especially where the new highway was going, where it was being surveyed. It was about six years ago when I wrote the song."

Friends, just lend an ear and listen
To a story sad, but true,
While our families, friends and neighbors
Search for distant lands so new.
We've been told that we must leave our homes,
From this valley we love so dear,
To make room for the dam they're building here,
To make room for the dam they're building here.

If you ever met a little child,
From you he isn't sure.
If he asked you for some water,
Would you turn him from your door?
Now, like him, there's countless thousands
Leaning on our guiding hand;
All he wants is some water from our land,
All he wants is some water from our land.

When the flood comes to the valley,
Spanning miles from shore to shore,
Then we realize, as humans,
We could have done but little more.
There'll be many a heart that's broken
Among the young as well as old,
For they'll never see the old homes anymore,
No, they'll never see the old homes anymore.

Poor old Grandad, his time has come
To bid farewell to all;
An empty chair left standing there,
His picture on the wall.
I'm sure the man who tends the gate
Will proudly let him by,
So he can tell his stories
To the Big Man in the sky.

Side I; Band 3. CANNONSVILLE DAM

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To a story sad, but true,
While our families, friends and neighbors
Search for distant lands so new.
We've been told that we must leave our homes,
From this valley we love so dear,
To make room for the dam they're building here,
To make room for the dam they're building here.

If you ever met a little child,
From you he isn't sure.
If he asked you for some water,
Would you turn him from your door?
Now, like him, there's countless thousands
Leaning on our guiding hand;
All he wants is some water from our land,
All he wants is some water from our land.

When the flood comes to the valley,
Spanning miles from shore to shore,
Then we realize, as humans,
We could have done but little more.
There'll be many a heart that's broken
Among the young as well as old,
For they'll never see the old homes anymore,
No, they'll never see the old homes anymore.

You have read of good old Moses,
With the rod did smite the rock;
Then came water for the multitude,
Water for the flock.
Now the same has come to us today
Like many years ago.
We wouldn't turn our backs upon our friends;
We wouldn't tell them 'No'.
We wouldn't turn our backs upon our friends;
We wouldn't tell them 'No'.

Side I; Band 4. BULLSEYE BILL

"I'll tell you where I got that. That was written in poem style in an old western magazine I saw twenty years ago or so. I read it over and over and I thought, 'Well, that ought to make a pretty good song.' I don't have any idea who wrote it. There was no name in the magazine; it was just written in there. Every time I saw that certain western magazine, I'd look in the back to see what kind of a verse was in it, 'cause there was generally one in there someplace. I can't even remember the name of the magazine, now; it was just an ordinary magazine of western stories. The tune, of course, is my own origination."

Bullseye Bill was an old prospector,
He had his home in the desert land;
Tough as a horned toad's skin in summer,
Claimed that he lived on sage and sand.

Once, on the trail, his burro left him
And took all the grub and the drinks along.
Seeing that Fate had thus 'prefit' him,
Old Bill sang this cheerful song:

I'm rough, I'm tough, well, I'm hard to bluff,
Though Lady Luck deserts me;
For sticks and stones can't break my bones
And the heat will never hurt me.

Bill found a pool of poisoned water;
Lying on his belly there, he drank his fill.
Leaped to his feet and cut wild capers;
Shouted because he couldn't keep still.

I'm rough, I'm tough, well, I'm hard to bluff,
Likewise very frisky;
I've paid good money for much worse stuff
Because it was labeled 'whisky'.

Up in the white-hot sky a buzzard
Swung in circles far and wide.
Planned to give his empty tummy
One grand feast when old Bill died.

Rattlesnakes coiled in a clump of cactus;
Buzzards swooped and they circled close.
Old Bill heaved a hunk of lava,
Dined that night on rattlesnake roast.

Sat by his fire a while and pondered
Why a snake would want to do him wrong;
Wrapped himself in a dirty blanket,
Sang himself this sleepy song:

I'm rough, I'm tough, well, I'm hard to bluff
And eating snakes is pastime.
This ain't the first and it's not so worst;
Well, it may not be the last time.

Just eighteen nights and days together
Old Bill bore the desert breath.
He left behind a heap of feathers
Where the buzzards starved to death.

He went to a town called Talaroso,
Hale and hearty, traveling strong;
Bought the drinks for the barroom loners,
Sang them all this cheerful song:

I'm rough, I'm tough, well, I'm hard to bluff,
Though Lady Luck deserts me;
For, swim or sink, and never drink,
The lack of it don't hurt me.

Side I; Band 5. ROGERS' HORNPIPE

This is one of the eighty-odd fiddle tunes Grant has composed over the four decades during which he has been writing music and songs. When he played it at the fiddle workshop at the 1965 Philadelphia Folk Festival, Bob Beers commented that it was the only true two-step jig that anyone had played at the session. Grant thought about it a while, and then agreed that he had probably misnamed it when he called it a hornpipe. Regardless — jig, reel or hornpipe — it shows how deeply involved in the tradition of old-time fiddling, northeastern style, Grant really is. Here is a tune that could well have been brought over from Ireland two hundred years ago; instead, it is an original composition which is in complete accord with the tradition that gave it birth.

To record the fiddle tunes included on this recording, we went to the home of Cordelia Hartley. Grant is used to playing for square dances and, therefore, wished to have her accompany him on the piano in the manner common at dances in the Delaware Valley.

Side I; Band 6. LEGEND OF SLIDE MOUNTAIN

The noted naturalist, John Burroughs, wrote the following in In the Catskills (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910): "On looking at the southern and more distant Catskills from the Hudson River on the east, or on looking at them from the west from some point of vantage in Delaware County, you see, amid the group of mountains, one that looks like the back and shoulders of a gigantic horse..... The peak to which I refer is Slide Mountain, the highest of the Catskills by some two hundred feet, and probably the most inaccessible; certainly the hardest to get a view of, it is hedged about so completely by other peaks — the greatest mountain of them all.... It takes its name from a landslide which occurred many years ago down its steep northern side, or down the neck of the grazing steed. The mane of spruce and balsam fir was stripped away for many hundred feet, leaving a long gray streak visible from afar."

Burroughs book apparently never found its way into the hands of Grant and his neighbors, for Grant describes the origin of his song thusly: "Everybody talks of Slide Mountain, asking 'why do they call it that?' What does it do — slide? Well, if it did, it wouldn't be there much longer, would it? It would wear itself out. So, I come up with an idea that there has got to be a reason to call it Slide Mountain; I had people sliding off of it, you know. No, I never heard any story like that about it; I just made it up. My wife tells me, if I could make a living on imagination, I'd be a millionaire!"

Come all you folks and sit a spell
While I picture you this scene,
A story that was told to me
When a lad of seventeen.
I met an old-time lumberjack
In the Catskill Mountain range;
He leaned his back against his shack
While he pointed with his cane.

He then began this story,
Which may seem very strange;
He told about Slide Mountain
And how it got its name.
It started with a woman
Who lived at the very top,
And then he said, "Please come inside,
Out here it's much too hot."

It seems that this old lady
Had lived there all her life.
Though never raised a family,
Six times she'd been a wife.
Of all the men she ever claimed,
With none would she agree;
Now, the human bones still lying there
Would make this plain to see.

She got the urge one morning
And loaded up her gun.
Her man was quick to take the hint
And started on a run.
Nevertheless, he did his best,
As down the hill he came,
One thing in mind, put space behind,
And miss her deadly aim.

Not slowing down till he reached town
Where he told the sheriff the tale;
One hundred men were deputized
To bring her in to jail.
But when they reached her cabin
And lead began to fly,
There was not a man would make a stand;
This was no place to die.

Protect yourself the best you can,
They quickly did decide.
It was then, a human avalanche,
Down the mountain they did slide.
The old man told the story
Without a single slip.
"You must believe me, boy, because
I was husband number six."

Then, walking to the door, he stopped
And leaned upon his cane.
"So, now you see that's really how
Slide Mountain got its name."
Now, folks, there may be some of you
Who think this story wrong;
I took the words just like I heard
And wrote this little song.

Side I; Band 7. THREE NIGHTS DRUNK (Child #274)

Grant really knew no title for this particular version of the old ballad generally known as "Our Goodman". He learned it from hearing another fellow sing it when he was just a boy and says, "I wonder if anybody does have a title for it." I asked

Grant if he had ever heard any other verses for the ballad (my interest was purely academic, you understand) and was told that he had not, although "I did hear a record of Pete Seeger singing it, I'm pretty sure it was him, and he starts to sing 'The fifth night when I came home...' and, then, clip, the song just stops right there and he starts in on another song and I never did find out what happened on that!" Most readers of this booklet will know that the song sometimes has a concluding verse or two that are not for prudes, to say the very least.

Oh, the other night, while returning home
Just as drunk as I could be,
I saw a horse standing in the stall
Where my horse ought to be.
"Now come, my wife, my pretty little wife,
Explain this thing to me.
How comes that horse standing in that stall
Where my horse ought to be?"

"You fool, you fool, you drunken fool,
If you could only see,
That's nothing but a Jersey cow
Your grandma gave to me."
"I've traveled this world over
Ten thousand miles or more,
But I never saw a saddle on
A Jersey cow before."

The second night, on returning home
Just as drunk as I could be,
I saw a hat hanging on the rack
Where my hat ought to be.
"Now come, my wife, my pretty little wife,
Explain this thing to me.
How comes that hat hanging on the rack
Where my hat ought to be?"

"You fool, you fool, you drunken fool,
If you could only see,
That's nothing but a frying pan
Your daddy gave to me."
"I've traveled this world over,
Twenty thousand miles or more,
But I never saw a frying pan
With a hatband on before."

The third night, on returning home
Just as drunk as I could be,
I found a head laying on the pillow
Where my head ought to be.
"Now come, my wife, my pretty little wife,
Explain this thing to me.
How come that head laying on that pillow
Where my head ought to be?"

"You fool, you fool, you drunken fool,
If you could only see,
That's nothing but a cabbage head
Your mother gave to me."
"I've traveled this world over,
Thirty thousand miles or more,
But I never saw a cabbage head
With a mustache on before."

SPOKEN: "Where did you learn that, Grant? Can you remember?" "No. I absolutely can't. I've known it for years, that's all I know. You know, the best explanation, Sandy, that I can give for that is — throughout the years, when I was a kid, you know, wherever there was anybody singing or fiddling, you'd find me around in the corner somewhere, when I was a little kid, you know. I'd be there listening. Well, that's how I picked up a lot of that stuff, because, I don't know, I was fascinated by such as that when I was a little bit of a kid, even before I knew one note from another."

Side I; Band 8. LARRY O'GAFF

About halfway through the recording session at Cordelia Hartley's, I asked Grant to play for me the tune of "Garry Owen". He and Cordelia went to it with a right good will, but when they were finished, both realized that they had been playing the Irish jig "Larry O'Gaff", instead. The notes I took during this session are somewhat sketchy, I'm afraid, as Grant and Cordelia wheeled from one tune into another for several hours, almost without stopping. If memory serves me, however, this is one of the tunes which Grant learned "out of one of the fiddle books".

Side I; Band 9. THE BACHELOR'S REPLY

I asked Grant if he had written this song before or after his marriage. Glancing slyly at Edna, he chuckled and said, "That was written after I was married. I just wrote that for the benefit of these other guys around here who are bachelors." Edna was cooking dinner for us, so her "Humph!" was barely audible over the sound of meat frying in the pan.

A friend of mine, just the other day,
Said, "You old son of a gun,
Come along with me, take a couple of gals,
Go out and have some fun.
There's a blond down by the railroad track,
She's a gamey little thing,
Or take the one called 'Poolroom Red';
We'll have a high old fling,
Drinks and everything.

"For you know, old man, we must shop around
And see what we can find,
Or we'll be left out in the cold
Like a dead seed on the vine.
Now you know you could, and it's time you should,
Or be a bachelor all your life;
What time is left, don't you think it best,
Take a gal to call your wife.
Don't you think that would be nice?"

Says I, "My friend right to the end,
I have heard what you've had to say.
For thirty years or more I've been a bachelor
And there I mean to stay.
I have got a home that I call my own
Where it's peaceful day and night.
Not a man could change, it wouldn't be the same.
I'll stick to my bachelor's rights;
Rest peaceful every night.

"In a little house just down the road
Lives three or four old maids.
With a sewing kit, every day they sit
In the backyard in the shade.
They live in peace from day to day
And I think their way is grand.
They would never change their way of life
For mansions, gold, or land.
They don't need no man.

"An officer of law, or a parson, too,
To keep the peace they think it right;
But every time they tie the wedding knot,
They've started another fight.
Then it isn't long before all is wrong
And you find yourself, someday,
Before the judge you stand with your hat in your
hand
And a great big fine to pay.
Friend, that's all I have to say."

"Some guy in the south came out with a record of that and he explained how his pappy used to make his guitar talk, you see. Well, I can't do it with this old guitar of mine. He done a pretty good job of it, but I can't do it. And that's all that there was. There was more talk about making the guitar talk on the record than there was singing on it. Now, I knew the song long before I heard this guy doing that, but that's all I ever did know of it. In fact, that's all I ever heard of the thing. Gosh, I was just a kid when I first heard that song. Songs like that are similar to what Bradley Kincaid used to sing — like "My Little Rooster", you know. No, I couldn't tell you just where I learned it. Maybe I'd hear somebody sing one verse here and somebody else sing another one somewhere, and that's how I learned it."

"Groundhog, groundhog,
What makes you back so red?"
"From living in this cold ground;
It's a wonder I ain't dead,
I ain't dead,
I ain't dead."

"Rooster, rooster,
What makes your claws so hard?"
"From a-scratching around in this barnyard;
It's a wonder I ain't tired,
I ain't tired,
I ain't tired."

"Tomcat, tomcat,
What makes your tail so long?"
"From a-prowling around these long dark nights;
It's a wonder I ain't gone,
I ain't gone,
I ain't gone."

SPOKEN: "That's a little thing I knew when I was just a kid. I don't know where it comes from." "Your mother sing it, or something?" (Grant's mother was quite a singer, herself.) "No, I don't remember her singing it. Some of the other kids around there was singing it, I guess. It was just a kid's song, you know."

"I learned that off of a phonograph record of Frank Crummet. He was a Canadian and, let me tell you, he was an awful good singer, I always thought. You know, them Canadian boys are good singers! Like, take folksinging — I'd rather

hear any guy out of Canada sing folk songs than anybody in the States. They've just got what it takes; it's a natural thing for 'em. And, in fact, my favorite fiddlers are Canadians."

The above quotation is a verbatim transcription (as are all of the quotations in this booklet) taken from the several tapes made of conversation with Grant and Edna. This one is, I think, particularly interesting. Despite the great influence of such singers as Bradley Kincaid and Vernon Dalhart, Grant's musical taste is the result of his growing up within the north-eastern musical tradition. Stylistically, the music of upstate New York appears to be more closely related to that of Canada and, of course, New England, than it is to the music of the Southern Appalachians. Ordinarily, this would go without saying, but the people of our northern states have been listening to southern mountain music on the radio for many years. The strength of the "cultural imperative" under which Grant makes music, however, is so great that, regardless of radios and juke boxes heavily programmed with American C&W, he is still, primarily a performer in the northern tradition. This point will be discussed further in the note to Side II; Band 7.

I had a girl named Annabelle;
She was in love with me,
But, for some cause, her family
And I could not agree.
Whenever I called down at her house
There was sure to be a fight,
And that's the reason why we'd take
A walk each Wednesday night
Down by the railroad track,
Down by the railroad track.
We'd sit for hours and hours and hours
Down by the railroad track.

Some people spoon in parlor chairs
And some in Ford sedans,
But Annabelle and I,
We had to make some other plans.
We could not use the parlor
And we had no Ford, you see,
So, every Wednesday night you'd find
Annabelle and me
Down by the railroad track,
Down by the railroad track.
I'd hold her hand and she'd hold mine,
Down by the railroad track.

I courted her for several months,
Until one summer day.
And then her daddy found it out;
There was the deuce to pay.
He said, "Young man, come here to me;
Well, I want a word with you."
Where do you think I found myself
When finally I come to?

Down by the railroad track,
Down by the railroad track.
The birds were singing merrily,
Down by the railroad track.

It seems that all the big events
That happened in my life,
Like smoking my first cigarette,
Proposing to my wife,
All happened in this self-same place;
Sure is a jinx to me.
But, still, there's troubles there each day;
They call it heavenly,
Down by the railroad track,
Down by the railroad track.
That's where I lost my liberty,
Down by the railroad track.

We're married now and settled down
With children all our own.
Across the door there hangs a sign;
It says "God Bless Our Home".
Both she and I take walks each night,
But up and down the floor
To try and get the kids to sleep.
We don't walk anymore
Down by the railroad track,
Down by the railroad track.
I wonder who is there tonight,
Down by the railroad track.

The other day, our little girl
Said, "Mama, tell me, do.
If good girls go to Heaven,
Do the bad girls go there, too?"
"Just good girls go to Heaven, dear,"
The mother softly sighed.
"Then, Mama, where do bad girls go?"
And Annabelle replied,
"Down by the railroad track,
Down by the railroad track;
Now run and play and don't you stray
Down by the railroad track!"

Side I; Band 12. KITTY SHARP

This appears to be Grant's own individual treatment of the jig "Kitty Sharpe's Champion". Grant can't recall whether he learned this one from a fiddle book or from another fiddler in the Delaware Valley.

Side II; Band 1. PAT MCBRAID

As mentioned in the introductory remarks, Grant Rogers spent some time working in the woods when he was a young man. In talking about his experiences there, he says, "We used to have some jamborees of our own back in the lumber-camps, you know. Once in awhile you'd run into an awful good fiddler and some of 'em could sing pretty good, too, jig-dance, and such like. There wasn't very many dull moments, you know; they had amusement of their own."

Regarding this particular song, Grant says, "I heard some awful good lumber songs — you know, for lumbermen, lumberjacks. Anyway, I just wondered... now, I've written a lot of songs and I wondered why I couldn't write a song based on this lumber business and I came up with 'Pat McBraid'. I wrote that one in, let's see, I guess it was in about 1960."

Come all you boys and gather 'round,
I'm sure the time has come;
For many times you've asked me
Where I've been and seen or done.
For now I'm old and tired,
No more youthful will I be.
I was born in that good old Garden State
In eighteen sixty-three.

As a lad, I've roamed the shores and fished
On the River Delaware.
I saw the raftsmen steer the logs;
Where they came I knew not where.
So, I became determined
It was this I had to learn.
Perhaps their boss would give me work,
Some wages I could earn.

I started out one morning,
Me bedroll on me back.
For food, I took my fishing pole
With a hook stuck in me hat.
And only when I stopped to rest
It was hours after dark.
Don't be surprised when I tell you guys
Here's where the story starts.

It was the early days in August
When I reached this logging camp,
The first time since I started
That I felt like heading back.
But soon a man walked up to me,
The foreman of the crew.
He looked me top and bottom,
Says, "What can I do for you?"

Says I, "It's work I'm looking for
And sure will do me best."
"Very well," says he, "but, first,
We'll (you'll) have to stand the test.
Now (I'll) go and fetch your (a) chopping axe;
Now yonder stands a tree,
Eighteen inches on the stump
And a (the) minute(s) you have or (are) three."

I'm proud to say I stood me test
With a little time to spare;
Stuck up me axe and turned around,
The whole crew standing there.
The boss he blew his whistle,
His watch still in his hand.
"The way it looks, go tell the cook
We've got an extra man."

He took me to the paying shack;
Says he, "Give me your name,
And whether fake or otherwise,
To me it's just the same.
But you must have a handle,
If you're looking to be paid."
Says I, "I'll take me wages
To the name of Pat McBraid."

Through me fifty years of logging
I have seen a mighty change;
From river rafts to steamships,
From motor trucks to trains.
If there's a moral you're looking for,
I'm sure it's plain to see —
We took the roof from the red man's head
To shelter you and me.

NOTE: Grant apparently made some inadvertent word changes in the fifth verse when we recorded this song. The words in parentheses are from his manuscript book of songs and tunes. Throughout this book, added to the bottom of various pages are short sayings, jokes, etc., which Grant has picked up over the years. Here is an

Side II: Band 2. GRAVY AND BREAD

I've traveled this wide world all over;
I've stayed in some fancy hotels.
Some were good, some were bad, some were different,
And some were the best in the world.
This one place I stayed was a lulu,
So good, so cunning, so neat.
Now, you may wonder how I'm still alive
When you hear what they gave us to eat.

On Monday we had bread and gravy;
On Tuesday 'twas gravy and bread.
On Wednesday and Thursday 'twas gravy on toast;
That was nothing but gravy and bread.
On Friday I spoke to the landlord:
"Could you please give us something instead?"
On Saturday morning, by way of a change,
We had gravy without any bread.

Side II; Band 3. BESSIE, THE HEIFER

"That's something that come out of Nashville, Tennessee. Little Jimmy Dickens, on the Grand Old Opry, come out with that. It's not very old. I guess I learned it from hearing it on the radio. The kids over at Camp Woodland all liked that one."

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Oh, Bessie, the heifer,
The queen of all the cows,
She gives more milk than any law allows.
In the morning she gives pasteurized,
In the evening gives homogenized,
Oh, Bessie, the heifer,
The queen of all the cows.

I took her to the county fair
To try and win a prize.
She knew just what was a-goin' on,
I could see it in her eyes.
Though the contest made her nervous,
She tried so hard to please.
But, when it come to milk her,
All I got was cottage cheese

From Bessie, the heifer, etc.

I planted me a 'tater patch
To try and raise some dough
To spend a short vacation
With some city friends I know.
But no one here would milk my cow,
No matter how I'd nag,
So Pa took my vacation,
Leaving me to hold the bag

With Bessie, the heifer, etc.

Side II; Band 4. AT THE END OF JIMMY'S BAR

Although this story is completely fictitious, Jimmy's Bar does exist "over on the old Route 17, not far from here." Jimmy, himself, gets a big kick out of the song, according to Grant. "I don't know what gave me the idea for the song. It was just something that struck me. There's so doggone many barrooms in the country that you see; still in all, we have these 'Temperance' crews, you know, that fights against barrooms and the liquor industry and such as that. I think that maybe something like that more or less gave me the inspiration on that. The funny thing was, there was another beer place not far from Jimmy's. A lady run it there, and she heard the song and she says, 'Grant, can't you write a song about my place, too?'"

At the bottom of the manuscript page, Grant has written the following: "A drunk fell from the sidewalk and landed in on a bar. After some effort, he regained his feet, looked at the bartender, and asked, 'Did you see me come in here?' 'Yes, answered the bartender. 'Well, did you ever see me before?' 'No, I can't say I have.' 'Then how did you know it was me?'

In a little country village
That was known from near and far,
Was Maggie's Store, a blacksmith's shop,
And a place called Jimmy's Bar
Where the folks they loved to gather;
They would come from near and far
To tell their tales and drink their drinks
As they leaned on Jimmy's Bar.

No matter where you come from,
No matter who you are,
You're sure than more than welcome
When you visit Jimmy's Bar.
Where the food is most delicious
And the drinks are mighty fine,
Our motto is "Enjoy yourself
And have yourself a time."

Well, one day something happened.
Some old maids raised a fuss.
They claimed to have religion,
And I guess that's bad enough.
They started spreading gossip
Which soon spread near and far.
They said, "We'll get some signers
And we'll close up Jimmy's Bar."

Well, this didn't worry Jimmy;
Not at all did he seem hurt.
"If they're as good as they claim to be,
They're entitled to a church.
So, I'll give to them my hotel
To remodel as they please;
I'll even buy the rugs to spread
So they won't wear out their knees."

They hired them a preacher
Who came in a fancy car.
He made himself acquainted
At the end of Jimmy's Bar.
With much congratulations,
Jimmy wished him very well,
"But, man, you've got a job to do
If you save their souls from hell."

Just then, in walked Miss Maggie,
Said, "Jimmy, don't be sore,
For you can move your bar down
In the back room of my store."
"Well, I thank you kindly, Maggie,
And I think that mighty fine;
Perhaps we'll help your business there,
As well as helping mine."

As the preacher stood and listened,
He slowly drew a grin.
"If you don't mind, I think it's time
That I had myself some gin."
As the three sat there a-talking
And drank till nearly four,
The preacher says, "Come on now,
Let's move to Maggie's store."

For days and days he did his best,
As he preached to them old maids.
His fare was growing slimmer;
No profits had he made.
But he stuck right to his bargain;
Would have starved to death, I'm sure,
Had not it been for Maggie
Down at the grocery store.

One day they lost their preacher
And they searched both near and far,
Till they saw a sign "Just Married"
Hanging on the preacher's car.
Well, they walked right in to Maggie's
While the back door stood ajar;
There they saw both he and Maggie
At the end of Jimmy's Bar.

"Well, come right in, you ladies;
You're welcome, I am sure."
You should have seen their faces
As they came on through the door.
While Jimmy mixed the wedding punch,
And he served it from a jar,
Till they all sang "Hallelujah!"
At the end of Jimmy's Bar.

Side II; Band 5. THE BOLD SOLDIER

Grant's own title for this is "The Ardent Soldier", a fact that I didn't learn until we got together again at the Philadelphia Folk Festival in 1965. I also discovered then that one consideration in his revision of the traditional

broadside ballad (Laws M 27) was to shorten it so that he could get all of the story onto one side of a disc on an old home recording machine. Grant told me the story in these words: "I heard a phonograph record of Burl Ives singing 'The Bold Soldier'. 'Course, naturally, he didn't sing the whole song like it is in Norman Cazden's book (The Abelard Folk Song Book, Abelard-Schuman, New York, 1958), because it would take two or three records to put that thing on that, you know. But he sang enough of it to put it together to make the record — maybe three minutes, or something like that. Well, I listened to it and I never could get it straightened out, see? So, I says, 'Well, I'll fix it up to suit myself.' So, I sat down and I wrote my own melody and changed the words around. The last verse, where the grandfather sings to the baby, that's all my own, and the rest of it's all turned around." As a matter of record, Grant never did actually learn the version recorded by Burl Ives.

Well, nearly every evening
You could hear so far and clear,
A song of a soldier
As he comes riding near.
He would ride right to the village,
To the richest man in town.
When he starts his singing
Folks would gather all around.
For his hi-de-ho, his hum-de-diddle-day;
Hi-diddle, dum-diddle-day.

"Well, Soldier, Soldier,
The news that I've been told,
You've come for my daughter
And you also want my gold."
The soldier leaned from his saddle,
These words he did say,
"I don't want your gold, sir,
But the girl I'll take away,
With my hi-de-ho, etc."

Well, the old man called his guards,
"Come quickly to my side,
And bring to me my daughter,
But see that the soldier dies!"
Well, he drew his sword and shield
As he slid down from the saddle;
The lady held his horse
While he joined them in battle,
With his hi-de-ho, etc.

"O'er this world I have traveled;
Many battles I have won.
But, now, I'll take your daughter, sir,
In spite of sword or gun."
Well, the guards they rushed to him,
On his shield this (their) sword(s) did clash.
Just then an hour of battle —
Some lie dying in the grass.
With his hi-de-ho, etc.

"Hold your hand, " said the old man,
"Don't be so bold.
Well, you can have my daughter
With a thousand pounds of gold."
"Fight on," cried the lady,
"That amount is very small."
"Hold your hand," said the old man,
"Well, you can have them all,
With your hi-de-ho, etc."

Well, the old man took them home
And he called them "son" and "dear",
Not because he loved them,
But only through fear.
Any day, now, in the parlor,
Well, the grandad you will see,
Singing to a baby
Who's a-bouncing on his knee,
With his hi-de-ho, etc.

Side II; Band 6. WILLIE DOWN BY THE POND

This broadside ballad, often called "Sinful to Flirt", (Laws G 19), is quite widely known in oral tradition, especially in the southern mountains, where it appears to have originated. Its currency in the north may be the result of Bradley Kincaid's recording of it which became quite popular. It was from this record that Grant learned it. In talking about Kincaid, Grant says, "When he was 'in business', he used to tour the country in search of these songs. He'd spend, maybe, a whole summer, generally around his own home state of Kentucky, and he'd come up with all these songs."

They tell me it is sinful to flirt;
They say my heart is a stone.
They tell me to speak to him kind,
Or else leave the poor boy alone.

They tell me he's only a boy,
But I'm sure he's much older than me;
And, if they would leave us alone,
I'm sure more happy we'd be.

I remember one night when he said
That he loved me more dear than his life.
He called me his darling, his pet;
He asked me to be his wife.

"Oh, Willie," I said, with a sigh,
"I'm sure I will have to say no."
He took a white rose from my hair
And said, "Goodbye, I must go."

The next young Willie was found,
He was drowned in the pond by the mill;
In the cool, placid waters so fine,
Just drowned by the brink of the hill.

Oh, Willie, oh, Willie, come back;
I will ever be loving and true.
Oh, Willie, oh, Willie, come back;
I will love none other than you.

Side II; Band 7. THE CANADIAN ROSE

At his point, it would seem to be appropriate to quote from Grant's discussion of fiddling styles, since his attitudes tend to reinforce my opinion that Grant is essentially a product of the northern musical traditions.

"Well, now, look — I'm a fiddler. Now, all fiddlers might not feel like this, but I've never heard my idea of a good fiddler in the States from the south, and there's where we find most of 'em. I'd call 'em 'hacksaw fiddlers'. They act as though they want to take their fiddle and do some trick with it, in place of the tune. Now, you take a Canadian fiddler. If he can't fiddle a tune right, if he's got doubts about it, he won't play it. He'll just mess around with it, all by himself, until he gets it right. These other guys, as long as they can hack and saw and squeak, they'll go right ahead.

"There's a difference in the sound of a northern and a southern fiddler, too. I think the northerner, as far as the fiddle is concerned, has got a better touch to his violin than all of these southerners. You take the most of these southerners, nowadays, that fiddles, they're all young guys. I'm thinking of one — I won't mention his name — as far as doing tricks, imitations, and all that kind of stuff, you couldn't beat him. But when it comes right down to playing an old fiddle tune, he couldn't touch a bow alongside of some of them Canadians, especially Don Messer. He just couldn't do it. You just listen to Don Messer and his Islanders. Where could you find a better outfit than that? I want to tell you, they're really good!"

At the conclusion of the piece, you will hear an example of the kind of hurried questions I tossed at Grant between the fiddle tunes he played for me that evening. These were asked only as an attempt to discover his sources and to get his answers on tape quickly, before he and Cordelia swept into another tune. There was little more that I could do, under the circumstances, although I freely confess that I know precious little about fiddle tunes and would scarcely have known what else to ask, had I had the opportunity.

"Where'd you learn the tune, Grant?" "Don Messner (sic) and his Islanders... ("Yeah") ...Prince Edward Island. That's one of his."

Side II; Band 8. THE BUTCHER'S BOY

This British broadside (Laws P 24) has been described as "one of the most widely sung of all ballads" (G. Malcolm Laws, American Balladry from British Broadsides, Philadelphia, 1957). The fact that it was frequently printed in America, both on broadsides and in early Songsters, would indicate that its wide currency is partly the result of "reinforcement" from printed sources. This may be even more true in the northern states than elsewhere.

Grant says, "That's probably a Bradley Kincaid song, too. I think that's where it came from, but I can't swear to it. I do know that I got some extra verses to it out of a songbook."

In London City, where I did dwell,
Was a butcher's boy that I loved so well.
He courted me, my life away,
But with me then, well, he would not stay.

There is a strange house in this town
Where he goes up and he sits right down.
He takes another gal on his knee;
Well, he tells her things that he never tells me.

I have to grieve and I'll tell you why,
Because she has more gold than I.
Her gold will melt and her silver fly;
Well, in time of need, she'll be as poor as I.

I went upstairs, just to go to bed,
And nothing to my mother said.
Oh, Mother, she did seem to say,
"What is the trouble, my daughter dear?"

"Oh, Mother dear, this you need not know,
All the pain and sorrow and the grief that flows.
Get me a chair, please set me down;
Give me pen and ink and I'll write it down."

And when her father first came home,
"Where is my daughter; where has she gone?"
He went upstairs and the door he broke;
There he found her hanging to a rope.

He took his knife and he cut her down.
There in her bosom these words he found:
"A silly girl, well, I am, you know,
Just to hang myself for the butcher's boy.

"Must I go bound, while he goes free?
Must I love a boy that will never love me?
Now, there's a laugh (?) will never be,
Till the oranges grow on the apple tree."

Side II; Band 9. FREIGHT #1262

"That happened in Pennsylvania and Vernon Dalhart wrote a song about that same train wreck. Well, I thought, 'If he can write a song out of this particular train wreck, why couldn't I?' Of course, it was a good many years later when I done it; I didn't write that one until about five years ago." Grant's father was a railroad man for many years, by the way, along with being a carpenter, painter, stonecutter, mason, and an all-around "jack of all trades". Grant says, "He was a really good blacksmith. Now, the only blacksmithing I ever done was sharpening and making tools for stonecutters. Alongside of a real good blacksmith like my father, well, I couldn't even build a fire in a forge!"

She pulled out from the shed at Kittanning,
The Freight Number 1262,
And on through the mountains she traveled,
While gay were the men in her crew.

They talked of their homes and their families;
To their loved ones they soon would return.
Though the night it was dark and was storming,
But the old crew gave this no concern.

As they crossed o'er the top of Oak Mountain,
Soon to go roaring down the other side,
It was then the engineer gave the warning:
"We've lost our air, boys, prepare now to ride!"

The old engine rocked as she traveled,
Gaining speed every foot of the way.
And then, with a crash, it was over;
And there on the track the freight lay.

When the work crew arrived in the morning
And found the dead and the dying lying there,
Only one lived to whisper the answer,
But soon was laid by his friends with a prayer.

This story is told of a freight train,
And it should be a warning to all;
For we must get right with our Maker,
For we know not when He may call.

Side II; Band 10. A PLACE CALLED HELL

"That was written recently. It was just something that come into my mind and I wrote it. Now, I don't think much of these door-to-door peddlers. It's all right, if you've got a good, strong-minded wife to say 'No, I don't want any of your stuff', but, if they fall for it like some of 'em do, well... There's days the blanket man, the kettle man, the posy man, and so on, on top of your fuel, your lights, and stuff like that — well, you just can't make it, that's all. You know what that is, Sandy; you're a married man!"

Come gather 'round me, children,
I've got some news to tell.
I went to church this morning
And I learned of a place called Hell; oh, yes,
Well, I learned of a place called Hell.

But I didn't get all the particulars
And, this may sound rough and raw,
If I knew where to buy the ticket,
I would send my mother-in-law, oh, yes,
I'd send my mother-in-law.

But I'm going back next Sunday
And have him tell me more,
For I know some folks right here in town
Should have been in Hell before, oh, yes,
Should have been in Hell before.

My wife, she bought some chickens,
A couple of hundred or more,
But still we buy all the eggs we eat
Down at the country store, oh, yes,
Down at the country store.

My wife, she bought a vacuum cleaner
Just to tidy up her room;
But now I see she's cleaning it
With the same old-fashioned broom, oh, yes,
That same old-fashioned broom.

Now, whenever them peddlers come around
With something new to sell,
I walk right up and say to them:
Take your junk and go to Hell, oh, yes,
Take your junk and go to Hell.

Side II; Band 11. THE LITTLE RED BARN

This is a popular square dance tune down in Grant's home territory. I can tell you nothing more about it than that it doesn't appear in the one fiddle book of Grant's which he took with him to the Philadelphia Folk Festival to help remind him of tunes to play there. The brief introductory remarks you hear before they start to play were left in to show you the kind of answer you are apt to get from a guy like Grant when you ask him about his music.

"Some of these tunes I learned out of books. Some I... some I fiddled without learning them. I guess that about does it. 'Little Red Barn', Cordelia, key of G."

I would like to express, once again, my thanks to those who helped to make this record possible. To Norman Cazden and Joe Hickerson I owe my first debt of gratitude, for they were responsible for putting me in touch with Grant Rogers in the first place. Lawrence Older, singer and fiddler from the Adirondacks (Folk-Legacy FSA-15), also recommended that I record Grant, following his appearance with him at Cornell. Cordelia Hartley lent us both her home and her talents, making it possible for us to record the fiddle tunes as Grant wanted them recorded. Finally, I would like to thank Mr. James T. Bowlker, a friend of Grant's, who let us use his home for the recording of the songs on this album.

S. P.

