

FSA-32

"Old Times and Hard Times"

HEDY WEST

a Topic Recording



FOLK-LEGACY RECORDS, INC.

SHARON, CONNECTICUT





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Hedy West is among the best women singers of the American folksong revival. That "among" is a pretence of objectivity: my private view is that she's by far the best of the lot. She comes from North Georgia and her family were, for generations back, poor hill farmers who raised what living they could on little holdings clinging to the mountainsides. But Hedy West is not the kind of singer who acts the "country cousin" and wears a cotton bonnet and makes a pinched nasal caricature of her "down home" vocal style just to charm city audiences. She's a well-educated girl, as proud of her fine training in symphonic music as of her family heritage of traditional songs. She's of that happy band who are entirely at home in either world, the world of fine arts or that of folk arts. Such people are few.

As often with hill folk, Hedy West has an intense feeling for the family circle, and it's a source of pleasure to her that many of her songs are from the repertory of her family, mostly being passed on from her great-grandmother Talitha Mulkey, who accumulated a store of ballads and lyrics in the course of an unsettled childhood shifting from North Carolina to Tennessee to South Carolina to Georgia. During the early decades of the twentieth century, great numbers of mountain farmers left their stony holdings to seek work in the cotton mills of the Piedmont, the lower country. Hedy West's family went there too, and so the musical style that Hedy was brought up with is not the "high-lonesome" manner of some mountain singers but the part-country, part-small town manner characteristic of southern communities moving from a rural to an industrial mode of life.

The most recent pieces in her family tradition are a number of coal-mining songs passed on from her father, the poet Don West, who learned them when he was a relief worker and union organizer among hill-miners in the 1930's. Of this most engaging and varied tradition of the upland Georgia poor whites, Hedy West is a superb exponent: no tricks, no impersonations, no deception; all artistry and conviction.

from the introduction by A. L. Lloyd

Side 1:

THE WIFE WRAPT IN WETHER'S SKIN
FAIR ROSAMUND
BARBARA ALLEN
OLD JOE CLARK
THE COAL MINER'S CHILD
GAMBLING MAN

Side 2:

BROTHER EPHUS
POLLY
THE DAVISON-WILDER BLUES
LAMENT FOR BARNEY GRAHAM
THE RICH IRISH LADY
SHUT UP IN THE MINES AT COAL CREEK
THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

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Sharon, Connecticut 06069

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**Notes by Miss West
and A. L. Lloyd**

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SHARON, CONNECTICUT

HEY WEST

"Old Times and New Times"

A Film by

Robert J. Ross
and A. J. Ross

1965



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ROSE-REGENCY RECORDS, INC.

MADE IN AMERICA

HEDY WEST

"Old Times & Hard Times"

I have been living in England for a year. I made this recording during my first trip to this country four years ago. There are two earlier records in the United States, and three later ones in England.

What am I doing here? Well, I watched a television film last night about platoon-leader-Anderson, model for something, because he's Negro, American and patriotic. (Despite the film's being French-produced, Anderson was just bound to receive lead-role fighting-for-his-10,000-mile-removed-country that proves itself racially just by rewarding him the position of platoon-leader in Vietnam. And there was good old Anderson, too staggered or unenlightened to be anything but Good-Old-Tom. And showing at the same time that deprivation hasn't made Negroes any better than anybody else.)

Besides watching that film, I've been reading about Germany, especially about Germany just before and during the Third Reich. I started this during the Johnson/Goldwater presidential campaigns.

Like lots of Americans I supported Johnson only because I was petrified that Goldwater would be elected and the most optimistic of my fears would come true: that we would be unable to avoid a harsh suppression (officially excused and defended, as it had been in Nazi-Germany, as anti-communism) of the degree of democracy/freedom/justice that we'd built at home. That is, that we'd experience fascism in America.

This anti-communism we've been building in America is a potent and dangerous threat to us. Because it is so well established and followed with such unreasonable devotion it can be an effective tool to suppress the dissent essential to democracy. It can already be a personal risk to question anti-communism. When the risk has become so great that we cease to question it, we'll no longer have a democracy. We'll be controlled by manipulated fear.

The second anxiety I felt that led me to read about Germany was that my country (and yours) may be on the road to constructing a record of brutality like the one Germany constructed during the Third Reich.

At the end of Germany's long exercise in destruction there was no empire won for her, nor for the victors. With the excep-

tion of arms-producing-America, all the participants were weaker, poorer, and tired.

One thing that Germany had earned for sure was that heinous record of human violation (that her individual citizens still suffer from): a booby prize of international scape-goat. Hate in return for hate.

(That was an uncomfortable position to be in, with no real compensation before the "economic miracle".)

Such a legacy of hate is not out of America's reach. We're well on our way. (As an American in Europe, I recognize it.)

My most pessimistic anxiety during the last election time was that with a president-Goldwater would come an atomic world war. Am I right when I think that few of us are unaware that in world war now there's even less hope for survival than there was earlier? We've become so potentially destructive that we can no longer be sure we can pick up the pieces of war-ravaged lands and rebuild our way to happy boom-times.

Now that we've finally got enough for everybody, we're sitting here about to blow it all up for fear of sharing it. And the thing we're about to blow it all up with is the same technological advance that has made the wealth-enough-to-share-with-everybody possible.

You have to laugh at our dilemma, if only to relieve the tension we feel when we wonder if we'll get over the hump.

I wonder if (and I also hope) we will learn how to get rid of the fear of being personally deprived when confronted with sharing (and in America with the terror of the grand communal sharing with the world that doesn't have it, and therefore — by our ethic — didn't earn it).

Our resistance is solid. We've always thought of sharing as foolish idealism that one could not practically afford in the face of the world's starving hordes. Our fears are so old, so thoroughly part of us, that it will be a tough job to recognize humanism, based on love and sharing, as the only possible contemporary realism.

I hope we find the way to survive, to welcome sharing, and to believe in loving. I don't want to say: "Goodbye, old world. I'm glad I had a chance to live in you before we ended it all."

That's part of what I'm doing in England: reading, and trying to find out.

I am also listening to and making music, neither for diversion nor escape. Not for irrelevant play. But because music is one part of the creative activity of man that gives vital evidence that he has value and is worth continuing.

Hedy West
London
May, 1967

Hedy West is among the best women singers of the American folksong revival. That "among" is a pretense of objectivity: my private view is that she's by far the best of the lot. She comes from North Georgia and her family were, for generations back, poor hill farmers of the sort called "hillbillies" or "red-necks", who raised what living they could on little holdings clinging to the mountainsides where, so they say, the valleys are so narrow that the moonlight has to be wheeled out in a barrow each morning and the sunlight wheeled in, and the land so stony that the cats run, zip, zip, zip, seventeen miles down to the railway junction, the only place where they can find any soil, and the pigs are so lean they have to stand up twice to cast a shadow. Silly jokes, of the sort they make about the conditions and ways of hill-folk who are often treated as clowns when they aren't being put on a pedestal as "noble Elizabethan survivals" or "our contemporary ancestors". Hedy West will have nothing to do with these clownish or mock-primitive stereotypes; she's not the kind of singer who acts the "country-cousin" and wears a cotton bonnet and makes a pinched nasal caricature of her "down-home" vocal style just to charm city audiences. She's a well-educated girl who attended Columbia University, as proud of her fine training in symphonic music as of her family heritage of traditional songs. She's of that happy band who are entirely at home in either world, the world of fine arts or that of folk arts. Such people are few.

As often with hill folk, Hedy West has an intense feeling for the family circle, and it's a source of pleasure to her that many of her songs are from the repertory of her family, mostly being passed on from her great-grandmother Talitha Mulkey, who accumulated a store of ballads and lyrics in the course of an unsettled childhood shifting from North Carolina to Tennessee to South Carolina to Georgia. The Mulkeys were among the Scotch-Irish who migrated from Ulster in the eighteenth century and settled in the mountains and intermarried with English, Irish and German immigrants, and sometimes with local Cherokee Indians. Hedy says, "A strong spirit of cooperation was at the heart of these mountain communities where hard labour was a necessity. As late as my parents' childhood, regional music was a vital

tradition inside family groups, in local social gatherings, and as accompaniment to cooperative work."

Perhaps in the past the Georgia hill folk had a repertory similar to that which Cecil Sharp reported from a bit further north in the Appalachians, where nearly every item he came across was an old English song or ballad (though there are some who say that this didn't represent the kind of songs the singers had readiest in their mouths, but rather the kind they believed Sharp preferred to hear them sing). Whatever the case, the repertory of Georgia "red-necks", and the singing style, too, underwent a certain change as the life of the hill folk altered. During the early decades of the twentieth century, great numbers of mountain farmers left their stony holdings to seek work in the cotton mills of the Piedmont, the lower country. Hedy West's family went there too, and so the musical style that Hedy was brought up with is not the "high-lonesome" manner of some mountain singers, but the part-country, part-small town manner characteristic of Southern communities moving from a rural to an industrial mode of life.

The most recent pieces in her family tradition are a number of coal-mining songs passed on from her father, the poet Don West, who learned them when he was a relief worker and union organizer among hill-miners in the 1930's. Of this most engaging and varied tradition of the upland Georgia poor whites, Hedy West is a superb exponent: no tricks, no impersonations, no deception; all artistry and conviction.

A. L. Lloyd

Side I; Band 1. THE WIFE WRAPT IN WETHER'S SKIN

This is one of the ballads handed down in the West family from great-grandmother Talitha Prudence Sparks Mulkey. It sounds like a simple narrative of a farmer who reforms his slatternly young wife by "tanning her hide" — in this case, wrapping her in a sheepskin and then beating her. In fact there may be more in it than meets the ear. Instead of the "dandoo, clish-to-ma-clingo" refrain common in the American South, many English versions have a refrain enumerating a number of herbs, rosemary, thyme, etc. In ancient times, herbs were regarded as protection against demons, and it may well be that in the original sets of this song the wife may have been possessed by evil spirits that had to be exorcized by the use of herbs and ritual flagellation. It is a hypothesis.

*A little old man he lived a way out west,
Dandoo, dandoo,
A little old man he lived a way out west,
Clash to my clingo,*

A little old man he lived a way out west,
He had a wife, she was none of the best,
Splat-ta-ma-lat-ta-ma-lingo.

Similarly:

The little old man went whistling to his plow,
Said, "Old woman, any bread baked now?"

"There's a little piece of crust a-laying on the shelf,
If that ain't enough, you can make it yourself."

He went out to his sheepfold
And got him a wether, tough and old.

He hung it up on two little pins;
About two jerks fetched its skin.

He threw it across his old wife's back
And got him a stick and made it go whack.

"You can go tell your people and all your kin,
I'll do as I please with my old sheepskin."

Side I; Band 2. FAIR ROSAMUND

This isn't a West family song, but comes from Massachusetts and is quoted in Eloise Hubbard Linscott's *Folk Songs of Old New England*. It's a rare song. It seems to have turned up only once in the USA and is known in England only from old broadsides. It concerns "Rosamund the fayre daughter of Walter Lord Clifford, concubine to Henry II (poisoned by Queen Eleanor as some thought) who dyed at Woodstock, AD 1177, where King Henry had made for her a house of wonderful working". Thomas Deloney, the Elizabethan balladeer, had a long ballad about the same lady, but he didn't mention the curious incest motive that is so strong in the present version. Hedy West says: "Through repeated singing I have altered the last phrase of the melody."

"I have a sister," young Clifford said,
"A sister no man knows.
She hath a color all in her cheek
Like a drop of blood in snow.

"She hath a waist, a waist, a waist
Like to my silver cane.
I would not for ten thousand worlds
Have King Henry know her name."

King Henry in his bower
Was hid so close and still,
That every word young Clifford said
He wrote down in a bill.

The first fair line she looked upon,
She did begin to smile.
The next fair line she looked upon,
The tears ran down in ile.

"Oh, cursed be my brother Clifford,
Oh, cursed may he be.
Can't he dote on his hawks and hounds,
But he must dote on me?"

Side I; Band 3. BARBARA ALLEN

This favourite ballad, with its story that seems singularly passive when one considers what blood-boltered narratives most folk ballads are, is enormously widespread in the upland South of the United States, and in one state alone — Virginia — 92 different versions were collected.

It probably owes its impressive survival to the fact that it was so often reprinted during the nineteenth century on broadsides and in cheap songbooks. Hedy West says: "I have rarely collected folk songs from any singer who didn't know some variant of this ballad. The basic text is from Uncle Gus Mulkey. I've made textual and melodic additions from other sources."

In London city where I was born
And where I got my learning,
I fell in love with a blue eyed girl
And her name was Barbro Allen.

It was in the month of May,
When green buds they was swelling,
Young William come from the Western States
And he courted Barbro Allen.

Sometime then a little later on,
When the buds was blooming,
Young William on his death bed lay
For the love of Barbro Allen.

He sent his servant to the town,
To the town where she was dwelling.
"My master's sick and he bids you come,
If your name be Barbro Allen."

Slowly, slowly she got up,
And slowly she came nigh him;
And all she said when she got there,
"Young man, I think you're dying."

"Oh, yes, I'm sick, I'm very sick
And death is on me dwelling.
No better, no better I ever shall be
If I can't have Barbro Allen."

"Don't you remember the other day,
You was in the tavern drinking?
You gave a health to the ladies all around,
But you slighted Barbro Allen."

"Yes, I remember the other day,
I was in the tavern drinking.
I made a health to the ladies all around;
I gave my love to Barbro Allen."

He turned his pale face to the wall,
For death was drawing nigh him.
"Farewell, farewell, my dear friends all.
Be kind to Barbro Allen."

As she was walking o'er the hill,
She heard the death bells knelling,
And every stroke it seemed to say,
"Hard hearted Barbro Allen."

She looked to the east and looked to the west;
She saw his cold corpse coming.
The more she looked the more she wept;
She busted out a-crying.

"Lay down, lay down that corpse," she said,
"That I may look upon it."
The more she looked the more she wept;
She busted out a-weeping.

"Oh, Mother, go and make my bed,
And make it long and narrow.
William died for me today;
I'll die for him tomorrow.

"Oh, Father, oh Father, go dig my grave,
And dig it deep and narrow,
For young William died for me today;
I'll die for him tomorrow."

*They buried them both in the old churchyard;
They buried her beside him.
From William's grave grew a red, red rose;
From Barbro's grew a briar.*

*They grew and grew to the old church top,
Till they could grow no higher.
They all tied up in a true love's knot,
The rose run 'round the briar.*

Side I; Band 4. OLD JOE CLARK

Before the railways, automobiles and mail order houses brought the town to the country, before television, radio and gramophone brought "instant music" into the home, the play-party was a natural solution to the problem of self-made social amusement in communities where religious feelings were so strong that dances were generally proscribed but dancing games were permitted to the young. A favourite dance-game song was *Old Joe Clark* with its melody based on the minstrel show tune of *Lucy Long*, and its text made up of floating verses borrowed from sundry other play-party songs such as *Ida Red*, *Shady Grove*, *Cindy*, *Liza Jane*, *Bile Dem Cabbage Down*, *Sally Ann* and others. Of the verses of *Old Joe Clark*, one Indiana farmer said: "There's thousands of 'em. Everyone has his own version." Scholars set the number more modestly at 144.

Old Joe Clark is one of the songs Uncle Gus Mulkey used to play on the fiddle when his fingers were still nimble. Kim Mulkey had disapproved and pretended not to know of his son's fiddle playing till he began to hear Gus play religious tunes. Kim Mulkey's fundamentalist religion placed native song and the instruments they were played on as being in league with the devil.

*Old Joe Clark's mad at me
And I'll tell you the reason why;
I run through his cabbage patch
And tore down all his rye.*

*Walk, Joe Clark, talk, Joe Clark,
Goodbye Billy Brown.
Walk, Joe Clark, talk, Joe Clark,
I'm going to leave this town.*

*I went down to old Joe Clark's
To get me a glass of wine;
He tied me up to his whipping post
And he give me ninety-nine.*

I went back down to old Joe Clark's
To get me a glass of gin.
He charged me up for whipping his horse
And he give me hell again.

I don't give a damn for old Joe Clark
And I'll tell you the reason why;
He blows his nose in old corn bread
And calls it chicken pie.

Old Joe Clark come to my house,
That lowdown filthy pup;
He run the bulldog under the fence
And drunk my liquor up.

Old Joe Clark's dead and gone,
And I hope he's gone to hell.
He made me wear the ball and chain
And made my ankles swell.

Side I; Band 5. THE COAL MINER'S CHILD

The song comes from the coal-fields of the Cumberland Plateau of east Kentucky. The mountaineers there had been farmers before the coal deposits were discovered. Beginning around 1912 the population began a conversion from agriculture to mining. The miners saw prosperous times from 1914 till 1927 when the coal market collapsed. Apart from a temporary boom during World War II the industry has remained depressed. The once-handsome land is laid waste and never restored; the once-independent mountaineer is often demoralised through bad conditions and forced dependence on the coal industry, where trade union activities have been made dangerous by the fact that the companies commanded private police forces and controlled the local and state law officers. *The Coal Miner's Child* is an east Kentucky re-working of a popular sentimental song, *The Orphan Child*. It evolved during the Depression days of misery and starvation for miners.

"I have no home," said the coal miner's child
At the door of a rich man's hall,
As she trembling stood on the marble steps
And leaned on the polished wall.

"My father was killed in the coal mines," she said,
As the tears dimmed her eyes so bright,
"And last of all, my mother is dead;
I'm an orphan alone tonight."

The night was cold and the snow fell fast,
But the rich man closed his door.
His proud lips spurned with scorn as he said,
"No bread, no room for the poor."

The rich man slept on his velvet couch
And dreamed of his silver and gold,
While the orphan laid on a bed of snow,
Dying of hunger and cold.

This is the story of a coal miner's child,
A little girl only nine years old.
She was found dead by a rich man's door;
She died of hunger and cold.

Side I; Band 6. GAMBLING MAN

"My father learned the Gambling Man from Etta (pronounced 'Etter') Mulkey, a Gilmer County neighbour from an unrelated family. She was the daughter of a local 'blockader' (a person who made illegal liquor from corn).

"Perhaps it was because Etta's face had been badly disfigured from a burn that she never married. Whenever my grandmother was giving birth, Etta would come and take care of the kids and the household for a couple of weeks. This kind of work was her established function in the community. The kids liked her because she was easygoing (so much so that the meals she prepared had bugs cooked with the vegetables) and because she knew many songs and sang them in a beautiful voice."

I am a roving gambler,
I've gambled down in town.
Whenever I see a deck of cards
I lay my money down.
I gambled out in Mexico
And I've gambled up in Maine;
I'm going back to Georgia
And gamble my last game.
 And gamble my last game,
 And gamble my last game,
 I'm going back to Georgia
 And gamble my last game.

I went down in the country;
I did not go to stay.
I fell in love with a pretty little girl
And I could not get away.
She took me in her parlor
And cooled me with her fan.
Whispered low in her mother's ear.
"I love that gambling man."

"Oh, daughter, my dear daughter,
How could you ever stand
To leave your dear old mother here
And go with a gambling man?"
"Oh, mother, my dear mother,
You know I love you well,
But the love I have for the gambling man
No human tongue can tell."

My father was a gambler;
He taught me how to play.
He taught me how to stand my hand
To ace, deuce, jack and trey.
I gambled out in Mexico,
And I've gambled up in Maine;
I'm going back to Georgia
And gamble my last game.

Side II; Band 1. BROTHER EPHUS

Brother Ephus probably had its origin in a minstrel show song. Many songs traditional in the South were introduced there by travelling "entertainments", medicine, magic and minstrel shows, which included musicians and singers in their programmes.

"I sing here a part of the version of Brother Ephus that I learned from Grandma, who sometimes accompanies her singing with banjo played in a double-thumbing style."

Brothers and sisters, one and all,
Ain't you going to harken to the giver's call?
The giver's call on the judgement day;
Poor little Moses going away.

"Where you going, Moses?"

"None of your business."

"Come here, Moses."

"I ain't a-going to do it."

Brother Ephus got a coon and gone on,
Gone on, gone on.

Brother Ephus got a coon and gone on,
And left me barking up a tree.

Boil my coffee good and strong;
Bake my hoecakes good and done.
Make up a feather bed and make it up right,
'Cause old Brother Johnson's coming here tonight.

What kind of slippers do the angels wear?
Golden slippers to skate on air.
They wear fine slippers and wear fine socks,
And drop every nickel in the missionary's box.

Some folks say that a preacher won't steal,
But I caught two in my watermelon field,
A-preaching and a-praying and singing all the time,
A-slipping the watermelons off the vine.

Side II; Band 2. POLLY

"I've been told there were three rambling musicians who regularly came through Gilmer County. One was Lum Ledbetter who sang and played on 'Ledbetter's canes', an instrument made by strapping two bamboo-like cane-flutes together. Another was Gus Wilson who played guitar and sang. The third was Jim Sparks who sang unaccompanied in a good tenor voice. He was my great-grandmother's younger brother. Like his parents, he was a rambler, and considered irresponsible because he could never stay put. He followed his father in being a saddle- and boot-maker with a handlebar moustache. As recorded here, Polly is the fragment Grandma remembers of a song Jim Sparks sang." It is a British song, now rare in England. It was known in Dorset as Noble Lord Hawkins and in Northumberland as Sir Arthur and Charming Molly. During the eighteenth century it seems to have been a favourite broadside and chapbook piece under the title of Moll Boy's Courtship. Scotland had its version too.

"I'll give you fine ribbons, I'll give you gold rings;
I'll give you fine laces and all such fine things;
I'll give you a lace petticoat with a border to knee,
And then will you have me, my charming Polly?"

"I don't want your fine ribbons, or neither want your
gold rings;
I don't want your fine laces or no such fine things.
I have a linsey petticoat sufficient to me,
And I never will have you until you are free."

"Oh, Polly, oh, Polly, will you lend me your knife?
I'll go right straight home and I'll kill my own wife.
And when I have killed her, I'll come back to thee.
And then will you have me, my charming Polly?"

Side II; Band 3. THE DAVISON-WILDER BLUES

"Davison and Wilder are two small coalmining towns in Tennessee. In 1930, local 4467 of the then weak United Mineworker's Union was located at Wilder. The company there forcibly opposed the union and kept the town under strict surveillance of their private police. When a miner accepted work, he had to sign a 'Yellow Dog Contract' binding him not to join a labour union or agitate against the company. A mass meeting of pickets was held, addressed by the labour leader Norman Thomas. At the meeting a local miner, Ed Davis, and my father Don West (one of six divinity

students who came to Wilder to distribute food and clothing among the unemployed miners) sang together *The Davison-Wilder Blues*, which my father thinks was written by several miners, including Ed Davis."

Mr. Shivers said, if we'd block our coal,
He'd run four days a week.
Now, there's no reason we shouldn't run six,
We're loading it so darn cheap.
It's the worst old blues I ever have had.

Chorus: I got the blues, I've sure-God got 'em bad.
I got the blues, the worst blues I ever have had.
It must be the blues of the Davison and Wilder scabs.

Mr. Shivers he's an Alabama man,
He come to Tennessee.
He put on two of his yellow dog cops,
But he failed to put on three.
It's the worst old blues I ever have had.

Slim Bowles organized the hollow,
About a hundred strong.
He stopped L. L. Shivers
From putting the third cut on.

(Chorus)

Mr. Shivers he told Mr. Boyers,
Said, "I know just what we'll do.
We'll get the names of the union men
And we'll fire the whole durn crew."
It's the worst old blues I ever have had.

We paid no attention to his firing
And went on just the same.
We organized the hollow
In L. L. Shivers' name.
It's the worst old blues I ever had had.

(Chorus)

Mr. Shivers he told the committee men,
He said, "Boys, I'll treat you right.
I know that you're good union men
And first class Campbellites."
It's the worst old blues that I ever have had.

I felt just like a cross-breed
Between a devil and a hog;
And that's about all I could call myself
When I signed that yellow dog.
It's the worst old blues that I ever have had.

(Chorus)

Now, there's a few things right here in town
I never did think was right:
For a man to be a yellow dog scab
And a first class Campbellite.
It's the worst old blues that I ever have had.

Now, there's a few officers here in town
Wouldn't let a law-breaker slip.
They wore their guns when the scabbing begun
Till the hide wore off their hip.
It's the worst old blues that I ever have had.

(Chorus)

I'd rather be a yellow dog scab
In a union man's backyard
Than to tote a gun for L. L. Shivers
Or to be a National Guard.
It's the worst old blues that I ever have had.

(Chorus)

Side II; Band 4. LAMENT FOR BARNEY GRAHAM

This elegy was written by teen-age Della Mae Graham for her father, who was president of the United Mineworker's Union local in Wilder. One Sunday morning Barney Graham was walking along the dirt road that was Wilder's main street, and as he passed the company store, two gun thugs shot and killed him. The community was so tightly controlled by the mine owners that no local preacher dared preach at the funeral of the dead union man; instead, the oration was preached by divinity students from Nashville. "The tune I sing here is from John Greenway's *American Folk Songs of Protest* which doesn't explain its source. When Daddy knew Della Mae Graham, she recited this poem and had no written tune."

On April the 30th
In 1933,
Upon the streets of Wilder
They shot him, brave and free.

They shot my darling father;
He fell upon the ground.
'Twas in the back they shot him;
The blood came streaming down.

They took their pistol handles
And beat him on the head.
The hired gunmen beat him
Till he was cold and dead.

When he left home that morning,
I thought he'd soon return;
But for my darling father
My heart shall ever yearn.

We carried him to the graveyard,
And there we laid him down
To sleep in death for many a year
In the cold and sodden ground.

Although he left the union
He tried so hard to build,
His blood was spilled for justice;
And justice guides us still.

Side II; Band 5. THE RICH IRISH LADY

"This is another song Uncle Gus and Grandma learned from their mother, about whom Uncle Gus says: 'She sung a right smart, all these here old time songs; I don't remember how many I've heard her sing. He (her husband, Kim Mulkey) didn't sing none of the songs like that. Most of the singing he done he'd do in church. He sung these old midnight songs (religious songs).'" The ballad is related to Child #295 *The Brown Girl*, but the situation is reversed, for there the man first scorns the girl but later his feelings change and he calls the girl to him, but she mocks him and says she'll dance on his grave. In England *The Rich Irish Lady* is best known in a seamen's version called *Sally and Billy* or *The Sailor From Dover*.

A rich Irish lady, from London she came,
A beautiful damsel called Saro by name.
There was a young merchant worth thousands a year
Come courting this beautiful damsel so fair.

But her beauty bring lofty and her portion so high
That on this young merchant she scarce cast her eye.
"Oh Saro, oh Saro, oh Saro," said he,
"I'm sorry that my love and yours can't agree.

"And now, if your hatred don't turn into love,
I know that your beauty my ruin shall prove."

"Oh, no, I don't hate you nor no other man,
But to say that I love you is more than I can.

"So you can retire and quit the discourse,
For I never will have you unless I am forced."
Oh, scarcely six weeks had rolled over and passed
When this beautiful damsel fell sick at the last.

She was tangled in love and she knew not for why;
She sent for this young man she once did deny.

"Oh, am I the doctor, you've sent for me here,
Or am I the young man that you now love so dear?"

"Oh, yes, you're the doctor can kill or can cure,
And without your assistance I'm ruined for sure."

"Oh Saro, oh Saro, oh Saro," said he,
"Now don't you remember when I courted thee?"

"You slighted, denied me, through scorn and disdain,
And now I'll reward you for what's past and gone."

"For what's past and gone, love, forget and forgive,
And let me have longer on this earth to live."

"Oh, no, I won't, Saro, and during your life,
But I'll dance on your grave when you're laid in the earth."
Oh, off of her finger pulled diamond rings three,
Saying, "Take these and wear them while dancing on me."

Pretty Saro is dead, as we all might suppose;
Some other rich woman willed all her fine clothes.
She's at last made a bed in the wet and cold clay;
Her red rosy cheeks are now mouldering away.

Side II; Band 6. SHUT UP IN THE MINES AT COAL CREEK

In the autumn of 1935, Hedy West's father, with two other union organizers, was arrested and taken to Pineville Jail, Kentucky. "While Daddy was in jail he shared a cell with Norman Gilford, an ex-miner jailed on a murder charge. He bitterly hated the coal operators and though he lived as an outlaw he refused, out of strict principle, to accept employment as a company gunman. Mr. Gilford knew and sang songs while he was in jail. *Shut Up in the Mines at Coal Creek* is one that he wrote down and Daddy saved. Across the top of the manuscript is written '217 miners perished in Coal Creek explosion'." The ballad concerns the explosion in the Fraterville Mine at Coal Creek (now Lake City), Tennessee, in 1902. It simulates the form of the farewell notes which some of the men trapped in the mine wrote to their families while awaiting death.

Shut up in the mines at Coal Creek
And I know I will have to die.
Go tell my wife and children
That I'm prepared to die.

The birds are gaily singing
Upon the mountain high.
Go tell my dear old mother
I'll meet her in the sky.

Shut up in the mines at Coal Creek
And I know I will have to die.
Go tell my miner friends
I'll meet them in the sky.

Side II; Band 7. THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

"This is basically the version that Nan Perdue of Fairfax, Virginia, learned from her mother-in-law Eva Samples (born in 1906 near Carrollton, Georgia). I've combined this variant with a similar one from my grandmother. It was a popular ballad in the Gilmer County community, and it was part of Etta Mulkey's repertoire." Altogether this ancient and mysterious song has persisted far better in America than in the land of its origin, whether England or Scotland. The last version of it found in the British Isles was noted down in 1883 from an elderly fisherman at Bridgworth, Shropshire, but in the United States it has turned up repeatedly, especially in the South and Midwest.

There was a woman and she lived alone
And babies she had three.
She sent them away to the north country
To learn their grammarie.

They'd not been gone but a very short time,
Scarcely six weeks to the day,
When death, cold death spread through the land
And swept them babes away.

She prayed to the Lord in Heaven above,
Wearing a starry crown.
"Oh, send to me my three little babes,
Tonight, or in the morning soon."

It was very close to Christmas time;
The nights was long and cold.
And the very next morning at the break of day
Them babes come a-running home.

She set the table for them to eat,
Upon it spread bread and wine.
"Come eat, come drink, my three little babes;
Come eat, come drink of mine."

"Oh, Mother, we cannot eat your bread,
Neither can we drink your wine,
For tomorrow morning, at the break of day,
Our Saviour must we join."

She made the bed in the back-most room,
Upon it she spread a sheet,
Upon the top a golden spread
For to help them babes asleep.

"Rise up, rise up," said the eldest one,
"Rise up, rise up," said she,
"For tomorrow morning, at the break of day,
Our Saviour must we see."

"Cold clods of clay roll o'er our heads,
Green grass grows on our feet,
And thy sweet tears, my mother dear,
Will wet our winding sheet."

