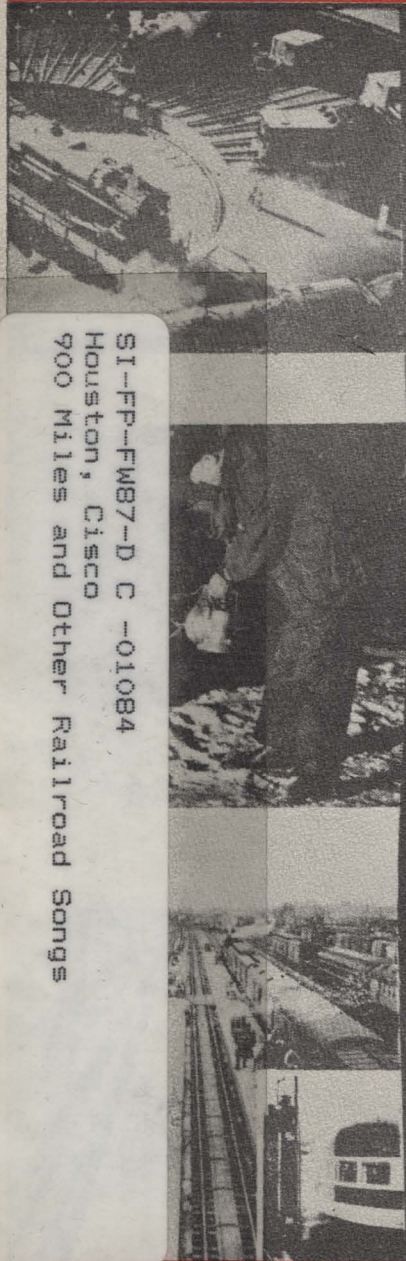


900 MILES and other R. R. SONGS



SI-FP-FW87-D C -01084
Houston, Cisco
900 Miles and Other Railroad Songs



SUNG BY CISCO HOUSTON WITH GUITAR

900 MILES • 'GETTING UP' HOLLER • THE ROAMER • WRECK OF THE '97
HOBO BILL • THE GREAT AMERICAN BUM • THE BRAVE ENGINEER
THE GAMBLER • THE RAMBLER • R. R. BILL • WORRIED MAN BLUES

FA 2013

FOLKWAYS RECORDS & SERVICE CORP., N. Y.

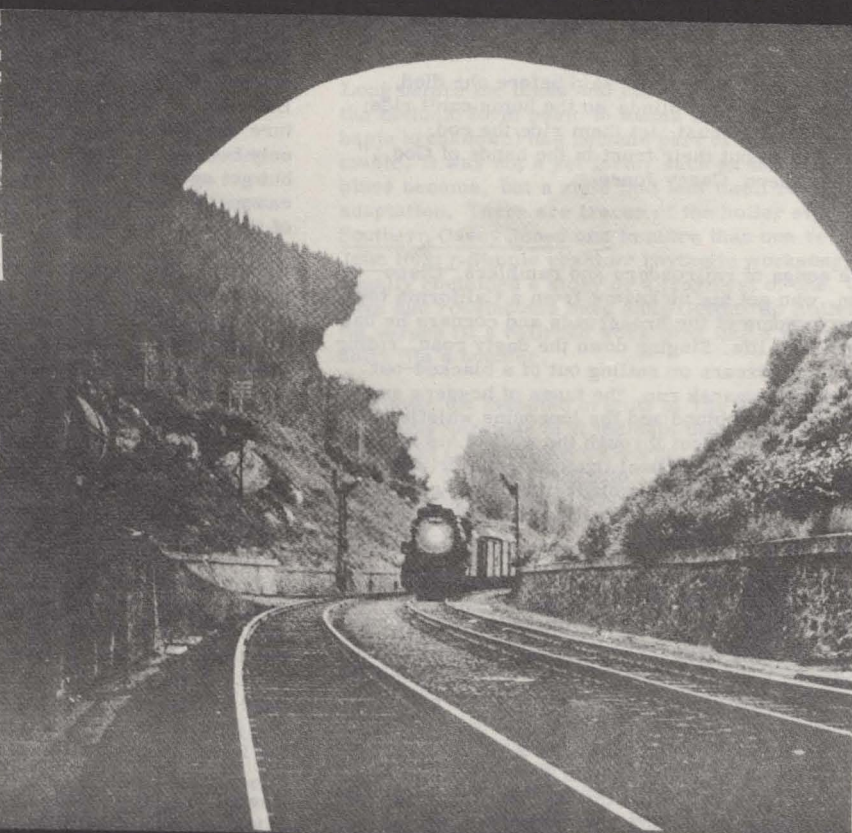
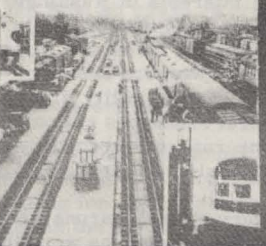
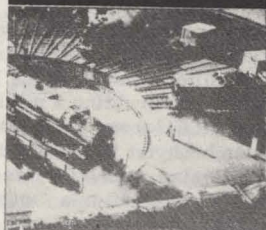
900 Miles and other
RR Songs

Illustrated Notes are Inside Pocket

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album No. FA 2013

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Introduction by Charles Edward Smith

"We have done praying, the spike is about to be presented." - Western Union message, Promontory, Utah, May 10, 1869.

"That is what the engines said,
Unreported and unread,
Spoken lightly through the nose,
With a whistle at the close."
- Bret Harte (c. Shapiro, Bernstein & Co.)
"Railroad Songs of Yesterday."

"Jay Gould's daughter said before she died,
'Father, fix the blinds so the bums can't ride;
If ride they must, let them ride the rod,
Let them put their trust in the hands of God.."
- Southern Casey Jones

In these songs of railroaders and ramblers, Cisco Houston, who got his nickname from a California town, takes us to some of the crossroads and corners he has turned in real life. Singing down the dusty road, riding the bouncing boxcars or sailing out of a blacked-out port on the Murmansk run, the tunes of hoppers and hobos were in his blood and the loneosme whistle of the Red Ball freight cut through the wail of his blues. In his songbook, that of oral tradition, the drivers are still rolling, and the gamblers and work gangs, boomers and bums, are highballing it out of nowhere, nine hundred miles from home.

In the year that Jefferson consummated the Louisiana Purchase, pushing westward the territorial limits of the United States, Richard Trevithick of Cornwall, England, built the first locomotive designed for rails. In the mining industry, particularly, the efficiency of rails for traction was already known -- it had only remained to hitch the iron horse to the wagon! A Canal engineer, Horatio Allen, brought the first steam locomotive to America and drove it over imported rails for a few miles through the Pennsylvania woods, recalling years later his mixed feelings of awe and justifiable shakiness. That experiment, which was to have linked a canal system between the Lackawanna Valley and the Hudson, was not a commercial success -- the engine could barely haul its own weight -- but it foreshadowed a new era. The use of canals for transport was not ended -- even in the modern world we use every conceivable means of toting and hauling -- but the prospect of vast networks of canal systems was doomed. During the next half century the work gangs from the canals and flatboats rolled up their shirts and socks and songs and went on to railroad construction jobs.

The first American engine, Peter Cooper's Tom Thumb (1830), was built to tackle the hills and curves of the American terrain and from there on out, though the Tom Thumb lost a race to a horse when its blow-er belt slipped, "Yankee ingenuity" and "American know-how" were more than catch phrases. Ross Winans, a Baltimore newspaper man, developed the prototype of the modern railway coach (with a 60-passenger coach resting on two four-wheel trucks). In 1831 the Mohawk and Hudson proudly put into service a juggernaut called the DeWitt Clinton, trail-blazer for the Twentieth Century Limited, and Matthias B. Baldwin, a Philadelphia jeweler, constructing a miniature designed from a famous British locomotive, not only became the first American hobbyist in this field but got an order to fashion a full-size engine for American rails. It was dubbed Old Ironsides, after a pioneer of the seas, the U.S.S. Constitution.

To some historians the 19th century presents a sanguine laissez-faire vista, with the rail barons of that era alternating as Christians or lions in the arena. The situation was never quite that simple. The railroads were public carriers that crossed state lines, mechanized trail-blazers that pioneered anew vast stretches of wilderness, sometimes following faint trails hewn out through countless centuries by grinding glaciers, the buffalos, the Indians, the explorer-hunters and the covered wagon trains, and at other times cutting their own new trails through mountain fastnesses and across desert wastes. From the beginning they established lobbies, organized initially to fight the entrenched Canal interests in Washington; government and state subsidies were sought, public confidence and sympathy cultivated. From the vantage point of today their treatment of workers seems almost brutal, their betrayal of responsibility with regard to conservation of natural resources callous and indifferent, but such concerns were secondary in the fierce competitiveness of their own struggle.

Toward the close of the century the rail barons were hated as enthusiastically by labor groups as were the barons of coal and steel, and not without reason. The Pullman strike of 1894, led by Eugene Debs, (in which the Administration almost blatantly took sides in a labor dispute), ended in bloodshed and blackballing, but it helped immeasurably to establish the right, as well as the need, of labor, skilled and unskilled, to decent working and living conditions. Moreover, it established a common bond between all workers in railroading, a bond that persisted despite caste and craft and conflicts of interests. This common bond is most apparent in the speech and song of railroader and rambler, from the highballing hogger to the Joe Hill hobo.

"A large part of the argot of hobos", writes H. L. Mencken in The American Language (Knopf) "is borrowed from that of railroadmen. In both, for example, a locomotive is a hog and an engineer is a hoghead (hogger)." Words, many of them slang expressions, were devised to fit the growth of railroading itself. Much of this picturesque lingo was transient or local to a line or area; nevertheless railroading, like most revolutionary developments in man's way of life, has also enriched the language with new words to describe new techniques and with old words re-shaped to fit new situations.

The binding force of language and its inner vitality are to be found in idiomatic usage. As each new trade or craft develops its unique jargon, the language once again becomes juicy with innuendo; implicit meanings of words receive new emphasis and facets of meaning are brought into play that may have been slighted in dictionary definitions or that have emerged in new frames of reference. Lustiness in language, particularly in folksong, is an expression of virility rather than an idle trafficking in smut. The use of the verbal form of jack in Gettin' Up Holler, apart from any specialized significance it may have in context, relates to the old English connotation of this word of Greek-Hebraic ancestry. According to Vance Randolph, in an article in American Speech, it was avoided in colloquial speech of the Ozarks, even in compounds, though other terms considered obscene or vulgar elsewhere, were quite acceptable. This is an example of a local taboo but it may be noted that vis-a-vis American and English usage, words that are merely ingenuous in one environment become vulgar or obscene in another.

Railroaders and Ramblers

There is probably no sound in America so universally nostalgic as that of a train whistle at night. It is a siren song for distant places and a sickness for home, an ache in the stomach and an ache in the heart. It's in the blues and boogie-woogie, in hymns and honky-tonk tunes. It's in hundreds of railroad songs and it's expressed in simple, homely eloquence in the title tune of this set that takes its guitar rhythm from a train and borrows a blues strain to shade its melody. In folksong, hyperbole expresses the unbelievable:

You can hear her whistle blow a million miles..

Before the uniform "calliope" whistle was introduced, whistles had as much individuality as engines and engineers. Casey Jones fashioned a six-tone whistle for his ill-fated Cannonball. The old 97's distinctive, sad-sweet whistle was known all along the line; one hogger blasted his name to the countryside with skillfully-timed jerks of the cord!

Before the gold spike was driven that linked the iron road spanning the country, the restless sea of the desert and the high Sierras seemed alike forbidding and unconquerable. The boomer (construction and railroad worker) like the prospector, could sing a tune like The Roamer with his heart in it. The rumbling trains of boxcars with their varied markings, spoke of places and people and, as Carl Sandburg wrote in the American Songbag, "gave cruel desert spaces a friendly look."

Long before the blues and jazz became widely known, the melodic form basic to them, the holler (like the banjo breakdown) had become part of American folk music. It was not a set form, such as the twelve-bar blues became, but a style that lent itself readily to adaptation. There are traces of the holler style in Southern Casey Jones and in more than one version of John Henry. Simple chant or rhythmic worksong, it usually contained a story or a fragment of one. Cowboys and roustabouts have sung Gettin' Up Holler but its verses fit a railroad work gang like a 999-mile shirt fits a boomer.

Whatever the disputed origins of The Wreck of the Old 97, early versions of it indicate that at least one railroad man (David Graves George) had a hand in writing some of them. The Ship That Never Returned is the generally accepted source for the melody. The Prisoner's Song, according to Carl Sandburg, also derived from this 19th century pop tune and another Tin Pan Alley job inspired verses for the latter. "That is," he wrote in The American Songbag (Harcourt Brace), "two songs Broadway launched and forgot, lived on and changed, mellowed and sweetened among the mountaineers." This process is not unusual in folk music and in its operation no hint of plagiarism is necessarily involved. Early American songs borrowed English tunes and this was true of popular music as well (there are quite a number of songs that, like our national anthem, were originally printed in verses only, marked to be sung to the English glee, To Anacreon). Other songs in this collection, notably The Brave Engineer and The Great American Bum, suggest this constant and healthy interchange between folk and popular music.

That folk songs change in the singing of them is illustrated by the genesis of The Wreck of the Old 97. It dropped an innocuous first stanza many years ago, so that it gets us right into the story:

Well, they gave him his orders at Monroe,
Virginia,
Saying, "Steve, you're way behind time!
This is not 38 but old 97,
You must put her into Dan ville on time.

This stanza states the situation, gives us the setting and creates suspense; it has the forefulness of effective narration. And it tells us something about railroading and about folksong. Monroe was a divisional point where Joe Broady -- nicknamed "Steve" after the "Steve Brody" who jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge on a dare -- got his orders* for the run to Spencer, North Carolina. Being hog jockey on the old 97 (the old was merely a term of affection for a comparatively new engine) was like being money rider on the race track. It was a fast (no passenger) mail train that made its owners some \$140,000 a year. On the night of the wreck it carried two mail cars, a baggage car and an express car that included a consignment of canaries. The Southern's pet was an hour off schedule coming into Monroe but this was no ordinary run -- the 38 was a train of another color -- and Broady's impossible job was to knock off an hour on a four-hour run. Early versions of this stanza put the run through to Spencer but folksingers trimmed fact to the demands of art and that "mighty rough road, from Lynchburg to Danville," was, in fact, the gist of the story!

In the third stanza it was the "air brake" he lost in early examples of the song; it is possible that "average" was substituted because it "sang" more easily, at any rate it has metaphoric justification. Freeman H. Hubbard, in Railroad Avenue (McGraw-Hill) suggests that neither of Broady's hands was "on the throttle" at the end, but that one was on the brake lever, the other on reverse. At that moment the flanges let go the rails and the ten-wheeler hurtled down a gully, leaping a hundred feet ahead of the place where she left the tracks, "her nose buried in the muddy bank of a stream in a cow pasture. The five cars followed, tearing off the corner of a cotton mill in their mad plunge." (Railroad Avenue) The impact of the wreck broke open the large express case of canaries. Unexpectedly liberated, they escaped to the cover of nearby jack-pines and through the crackle of flame and the hiss of steam, rescuers were treated to an incongruous flood of melody.

* from Railroads in the U.S.A., published by UNESCO OEEC, page 207, Chapter "The 'Train Orders' System Of Railway Operation." " 'Train orders' are of particular importance in the operation of American lines, being used as the official means of conveying the instructions of the superintendent to the conductor and enginemen of a train relating to any matter affecting the movement of their train not otherwise provided by the time-table or current rules and instructions." 1952

The talk of oldtime railroaders was spiced with the slang of bad men and bordellos. Work trains quite likely gave the caboose some of its borderline appellations such as saloon and crib. The grifters, the bad bums and the gamblers were the camp followers of railway work gangs as they had been of lumberjacks, riverboat men and miners. In this twilight world a gambler was as often accepted as a good-time Joe, a Main Line maverick, as he was cursed for being a trigger-happy scoundrel. The gambler in this group of songs is sympathetically drawn, even to his cheap cigar, an episode in his checkered career succinctly etched for us. Folklorists relate various stanzas of this saga to Danville Girl, Poor Boy, Coon Can and Ten Thousand Miles From Home -- more than enough to give it a mountain pedigree!

"There was an acutal Railroad Bill," Carl Sandburg recalls for us in his Songbag, "who shot to kill and was feared and hunted. Southern Negro work gangs have fixed him in a ballad of hundreds of line." Some have it that he was a railroad man gone bad, that he turned on his own kind (this made him worse than a cop-killer,) that a Car-seal Hawk tracked him down, that he lost on a quick draw for taking another man's wife. Here, in Cisco's Railroad Bill, are some of the most descriptive stanzas wrapped up in a package and pointing unmistakably to Southern and mountain antecedents. In the line that makes up the refrain the word ride is much more ominous, powerful and threatening than its surface sense of harassment. The illiterate Southern Negro, like the illiterate Southern white, got to the heart of a word and made it vibrate.

Bums and Boomers

"He builds the Pullmans and rides the rods."

What Is A Hobo?

Quoted by Godfrey Irwin in American Tramp and Underworld Slang (Scholaris Press, London)

A tramp worked when necessary. A bum neither worked nor traveled "except when impelled to motion by the police," according to Godfrey Irwin. (In practice, words such as bum, tramp and hobo were rather loosely used, even by bums.) Joe Hill's Wobblies (members of the International Workers of the World) liked the name, which suggested the wobbling motion of a freight train "walking the dog". They were hobos, Irwin tells us, "but certainly not tramps or bums.. but all three classes use substantially the same argot." The etymology of hobo is uncertain. It may be a simple contraction, assuming ho to be a greeting, and taking bo to mean man, pal, brother, and so forth. On the other hand ho could conceivably relate to hoo-gow or to the one-time sense of hoosieras a road or highway. There were obviously more tramp philosophers than philologists.

Copyright laws and high-flown intellectual concepts tend to obscure the fact that originality is the discovery of relationships. Everything was goulash to the muligan of hobo poets and singers. The Wobblies were free-thinking, free-wheeling, organization-minded individualists who quoted Abolitionists and Abe Lincoln and wrote doggeral for the underdog. Their poet laureate was Joe Hill, singer, organizer, boomer and trade unionist. When he was caught and shot in what was termed a frame-up, his ashes were sent in small envelopes to the far corners of the world and scattered to friendly winds to make fertile the flowers of freedom.

In the early part of this century, as in the preceding one, much of folksong had an awkward grace. The clumsy and the commonplace were a part of the earthiness of a new pioneer spirit in American writing. Bret Harte, Mark Twain and Jack London often talked a language that came natural to the boomers and bums and that is preserved for us in their songs, from the wry humor of The Great American Bum to the rolling, rocking vigor of Worried Man Blues. Sandburg reminds us (in the Songbag) that the former song is widely and popularly known as "We Are Four Bums," (from quartet singing) but whether the verse or the refrain came first we are unable to say. The Rambler is a boomer's song, and one of the best, expressing the feelings of a railroad man who has the roaming fever. (Boomers who chose to settle down in one locale were known as "the home guard.") The boomer dreams of settling down but there's the siren sound of the whistle

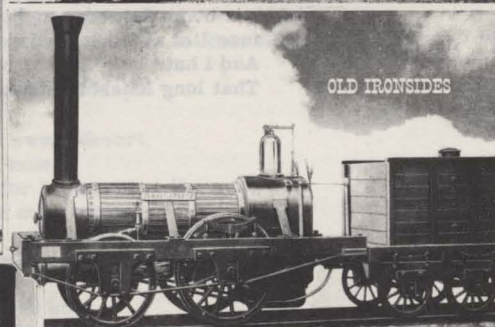
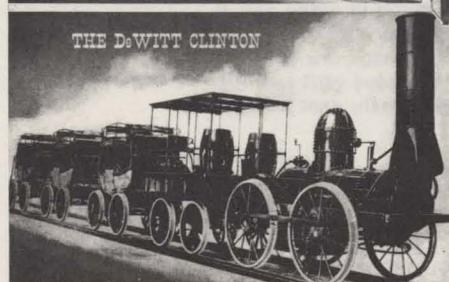
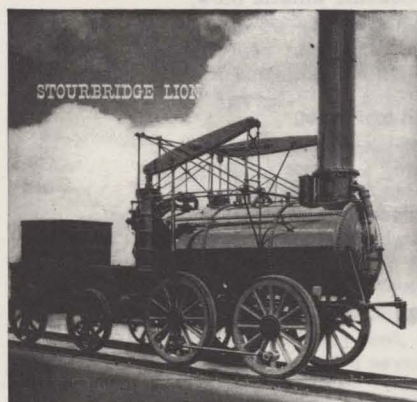
blowing and he grabs a fast freight, "a Red Ball train."and the last hope of his lonely wandering is a friendly grave beside the tracks:

So I can hear the trains roll by....

Hobo Bill is a dirge for a bum, an affectionate and homely elegy.

If you knew the thousands of scattered stanzas that a singer has to sort out in his mind when he picks up his guitar, you'd appreciate statistically what a good job Cisco Houston has done, making up each song in the shape of its story and letting his voice roll along the railroad ties of his guitar. You will have noticed in these and other songs that the engine is a she. That's good folk tradition and comes naturally to railroad men, even when the big brass call engines by male names such as Tom Thumb and DeWitt Clinton. Possibly for this reason the term jack for locomotive never caught on. It's a masculine word!

Acknowledgements: Railroad writers Allen, Morse and Hubbard; ballad hunters Sandburg, Lomax (John and Alan), Carmer, Sherwin and McClintock; word hunters Mencken, Irwin, Matthews, Craigie, and the Oxford English Dictionary (the big job); story hunter Botkin; magazines American Speech, California Folklore Quarterly; bibliography: A Bibliography of North American Folklore and Folksong, Haywood, Charles (Greenberg, NYC).

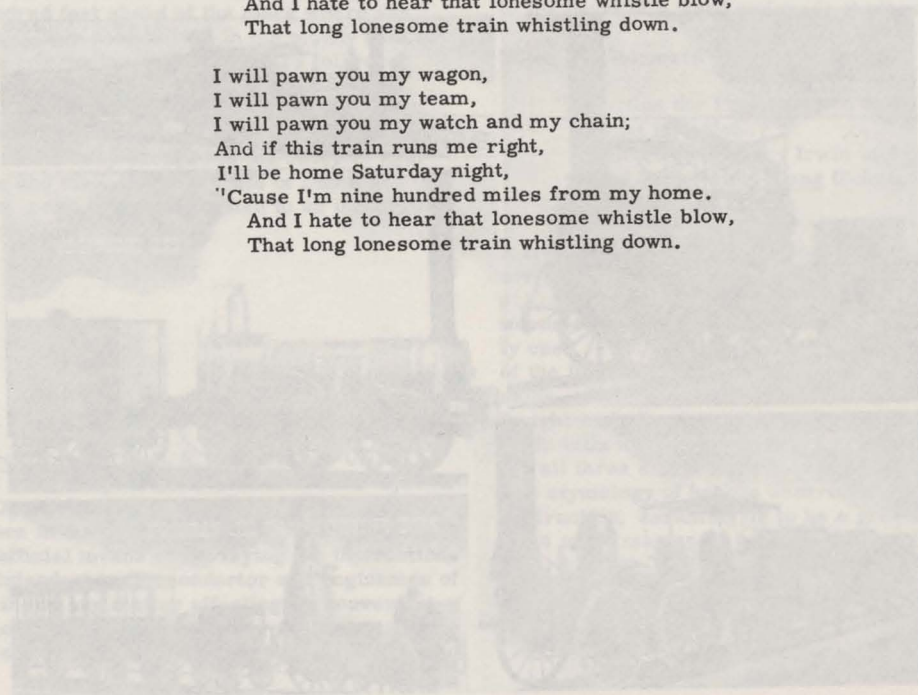


900 MILES

I am walking down this track,
I've got tears in my eyes,
I'm tryin' to read a letter from my home;
And if this train runs me right
I'll be home Saturday night,
'Cause I'm nine hundred miles from my home.
And I hate to hear that lonesome whistle blow,
That long lonesome train whistling down.

Well this train I ride on,
Is a hundred coaches long,
You can hear her whistle blow a million miles;
And if this train runs me right
I'll see my woman Saturday night,
'Cause I'm nine hundred miles from my home.
And I hate to hear that lonesome whistle blow,
That long lonesome train whistling down.

I will pawn you my wagon,
I will pawn you my team,
I will pawn you my watch and my chain;
And if this train runs me right,
I'll be home Saturday night,
'Cause I'm nine hundred miles from my home.
And I hate to hear that lonesome whistle blow,
That long lonesome train whistling down.



GETTIN' UP HOLLER

Talk about gettin' up at the break of the day,
Makin' my money and throwing it away.
Well it's too damn hard for me,
It's too damn hard for me,
Well, it's too damn hard for me.

I drove old Bet till the break of the sweat,
Six o'clock and it ain't day yet.
I'm going to jack you soon,
I'm going to jack you soon,
Well, I'm going to jack you soon.

I heard a mighty rumbling 'round the water-
ing trough,
Skinny kicked the hell out of the walking
boss.

But I ain't bothered yet,
No I ain't bothered yet,
Well, I ain't bothered yet.

I wash my shirt and starch it in sweat,
Tell all the gals I ain't bothered yet.
And you better not bother me,
No you better not bother me,
Well, you better not bother me.

THE ROAMER

Way out on the wind swept desert,
Where nature favors no man,
A buffalo found his brother,
At rest on the sun-baked sand.

Now the buffalo said to his brother,
"What sickness got you this way?"
But his brother never said, for his brother
was dead,
Been dead since a-way last May.

Way out on the wind swept desert,
I heard a big Indian moan,
And I left my tent, for I knew what it meant,
And swore I'd never more roam.

It was early in the morning when I stopped
a-running,
My legs were tired and sore,
I'd lost fifty pounds on the hot desert ground
And I'd lose that many more.

WRECK OF THE 97

Well he gave him his orders at Monroe, Virginia
Sayin', "Steve you are way behind time,
This is not 38 but its old 97
You must put her into Danville on time."

He turned and said to his black greasy fireman,
"Just shovel on a little more coal,
And when we cross that White Oak Mountain
You can watch old 97 roll."

It's a mighty rough road from Lynchburg to
Danville,
On a line on a three mile grade,
It was on this grade that he lost his average,
You can see what a jump he made.

He was going down the grade makin' 90 miles
an hour,
When his whistle broke into a scream...
They found him in the wreck
With his hand on the throttle, he was scalded
to death by the steam.

Now ladies, you must take warning,
From this time now on learn,
Never speak harsh words to your true
loving husband,
He may leave you and never return.

HOBO BILL

Riding on an east-bound freight train, speeding
through the night,
Hobo Bill the railroad bum was fighting for his
life;
As the train sped through the darkness with a
raging storm outside,
Hobo Bill the railroad bum was taking his last ride.

The sadness of his eyes revealed the torture of
his soul,
As he raised a weak and weary hand to brush away
away the cold;
Outside the rain was a-pourin' on that lonely
boxcar door,
And the little form of Hobo Bill lay still upon
the floor.

He heard the whistle blowin' in a dreamy sort of
way,
The hobo seemed contented for he smiled there
where he lay;
It was early in the morning when they raised the
hobo's head,
And the smile still lingered on his face but Hobo
Bill was dead.

There was no mother's longing to think of his
weary soul,
He was nothing but a railroad bum who died out
in the cold.

THE GREAT AMERICAN BUM

Come all you jolly jokers if you want to
have some fun,
And listen while I relate the tale of the
great American bum.
From the east and west and north and south
like a swarm of bees they come,
They sleep in the dirt and they wear a shirt
that's dirty and full of crums.

I am a bum a jolly old bum and I live
like a royal Turk,
And I have good luck and I bum all my
chuck and the heck with the man
that works.

It's early in the morning when the dew is on
the ground,
A bum arises from his nest and gazes all
around,
While going east they're loaded, and going
west sealed tight,
"I reckon we'll have to ride aboard the fast
express tonight."

I am a bum a jolly old bum and I live etc.

I beat my way from 'Frisco to the rock-
bound coast of Maine,
From Canada to Mexico and all the way back
again.
Well I met a man the other day that I never
met before,
And he asked me if I wanted a job a-shovelin'
iron ore.
I asked him what the wages was and he
said: "ten cents a ton."
I said: "old fellow go scratch your.. neck,
I'd rather be on the bum."

I am a bum a jolly old bum etc.

Oh, lady would you be kind enough to give me
somethin' to eat,
A piece of bread and butter and a tender slice
of meat.
Some apple pie and custard just to tickle me
appetite,
For really I'm so hungry, don't know where
I'll sleep tonight.

I am a bum a jolly old bum etc.

THE BRAVE ENGINEER

On a dark and stormy night, not a star was
in sight,
And the north wind come howling down the
line;
With his sweetheart so dear, stood a brave
engineer,
With his orders to pull old number 9.

With a tear in her eye, she kissed him good-
by,
And the joy in his heart he could not hide;
And the whole world seemed bright, as she
told him that night
That tomorrow she'd be his blushing bride.

Well the wheels hummed a song, as the
train rolled along,
And the black smoke came pouring from the
stack;
And the head light that gleamed seemd to
brighten his dream
Of tomorrow when he'd be going back.

As he rounded the hill, his brave heart stood
still,
For a headlight was shining in his face;
And he uttered a prayer, as he threw on the
air
For he knew he had run his final race.

In the wreck he was found, lyin' there on the
ground,
And he asked them to raise his weary head;
As his breath slowly went, this message he
sent
To the maiden who thought that she'd be wed.

There's a little white home, I have bought for
our own
Where I dreamed we'd be happy by and by;
And I leave it for you, for I know you'll be
true,
Till we meet at that Golden Gate, Goodbye.

THE GAMBLER

"Good morning Mr. Railroad man,
What time do your trains roll by?"
"At nine-sixteen and two-forty-four,
And twenty-five minutes till five."

"It's nine-sixteen and two-forty-four,
Twenty-five minutes till five,
Thank you Mr. Railroad man,
I want to watch your trains roll by."

Standing on a platform,
Smoking a cheap cigar
Waiting for an old freight-train
That carries an empty car.

Well, I pulled my hat down over my eyes,
And I walked across the track,
And I caught me the end of an old freight-train,
And I never did come back.

I sat down in a gamblin' game,
And I could not play my hand,
Just thinkin' about that woman I love
Run away with another man.

Run away with another man, Poor Boy,
Run away with another man,
I was thinking about that woman that I love,
Run away with another man.

THE RAMBLER

Come and gather all around me,
Listen to my tale of woe,
Got some good advice to give you,
Lot of things you ought to know.
Take a tip from one whose traveled,
And never stopped from rambling round,
'Cause once you get the roaming fever
Why, you never want to settle down.
You never want to settle down.

I met a little gal in 'Frisco,
Asked her if she'd be my wife,
I told her I was tired of roaming,
Goin' to settle down for life.
Then I heard the whistle blowin',
And I knew it was a Red Ball train,
And I left that gal beside the railroad
And I never saw the gal again.
I never saw the gal again.

Well, I traveled all over the country,
I traveled everywhere,
I've been on every branch line railroad,
And I never paid a nickle fare.
I've been from Maine to Californy,
And from Canada to Mexico,
And I never tried to save no money,
And now I've got no place to go.
Now I've got no place to go.

Well, listen to a boomer's story,
Pay attention to what I say,
Well, I hear another train a-comin'
And I guess I'll be on my way.
If you want to do me a favor,
When I lay me down and die,
Just dig my grave beside the railroad,
So I can hear the trains go by.
So I can hear the trains go by.

RAILROAD BILL

Railroad Bill, Railroad Bill,
He never worked and he never will,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill he was a mighty mean man,
He shot the midnight lantern out the brakeman's
hand,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill took my wife,
Said if I didn't like it, he would take my
life,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Going up on a mountain, going out west,
"Thirty-eight special" sticking out of my vest,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Buy me a pistol just as long as my arm,
Kill everybody ever done me harm,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

I've got a "thirty-eight special" on a "forty-five
frame,
How in the world can I miss him when I got dead aim,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill, Railroad Bill,
He never worked and he never will,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Buy me a pistol just as long as my arm,
Kill everybody ever done me harm,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Honey, honey, think I'm a fool,
Think I would quit you while the weather is cool,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill, Railroad Bill,
He never worked and he never will,
I'm going to ride old Railroad Bill.

WORRIED MAN BLUES

It takes a worried man to sing a worried song (3)
I'm worried now but I won't be worried long.

I went across the river and I lay down to sleep (3)
When I woke up I had shackles on my feet.

Twenty-one links of chain around my leg (3)
And on each link the initial of my name.

Takes a worried man to sing a worried song (3)
I'm worried now but I won't be worried long.

I asked that judge what's going to be my fine (3)
Twenty-one years on the Rocky Mountain Line.

Twenty-one years to pay my awful crime (3)
Twenty-one years and I still got ninety-nine.

Takes a worried man to sing a worried song (3)
I'm worried now but I won't be worried long.

If anybody ask you "Well who made up this song" (3)
Tell 'em it was me and I've done been here and gone.

Takes a worried man to sing a worried song (3)
I'm worried now but I won't be worried long.

PHOTOS : Association of American Railroads
Teacher's Kit, Railroad Transportation



~ Railway Trade-Marks ~

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